

ARMENIAN REVIEW

SPRING, 1950

SPECIAL

THE PEOPLE AND THE
LAND OF THE ARMENIANS

By Nicol Aghbalian

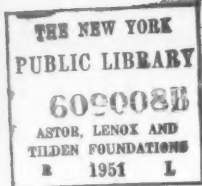
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H. Saninian
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Alexander Khatissian
H. Kurdian
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Raffi

"Armenian Life Abroad"

Poetry, Harbord Mission, Book Reviews

Volume Three, Number One-9



THE ARMENIAN REVIEW

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The Armenian Review

THE ARMENIAN REVIEW

SPRING, 1950

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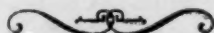
VOLUME THREE, NUMBER ONE-9

• • SPRING: MARCH, 1950

THE PEOPLE AND THE LAND OF THE ARMENIANS

By NICOL AGHBALIAN

(Translated by James G. Mandalian)



Like its literature, the Armenian nation took form in our historic fatherland. Until the Fifth Century B.C. we know nothing definite in regard to our nation. The inscription of Darius is the first and authentic testimony of the existence of the Armenian nation in our fatherland. From those days until the discovery of our alphabet nine centuries passed when the Armenian lived on his land, for a few centuries subject to Persian domination, for a brief period an independent state, after which the Parthians, as masters of Persia and Armenia, established their own royal dynasty—The Arshakounis (Arsacids) in our country.

With the emergence of the Sassanid Dynasty in Persia, the Parthian Dynasty in Armenia was weakened and by degrees was Armenianized in order to maintain its tottering throne. It was in the reign of the last Parthian king that the foundation of Armen-

ian literature was laid. After the fall of the Arshakounis, for nearly four and a half centuries, our country was ruled by the Greek, the Persian, then the Arab. For nearly a century and a half the country was ruled by native kings, after which it was laid in ruins by the long rivalry between the Turk and the Persian. In the beginning of the Nineteenth Century Russia entered the Caucasus, by degrees occupied a part of Armenia, and established safety of person and property. Under her protection the Armenian nation reassembled itself and multiplied, until the beginning of our century it created first an independent, and later an autonomous Armenia. For twenty-one centuries the Armenians were confronted with one supreme problem—the extension of Armenian rule within the geographic borders of the fatherland. Today the problem is the same,—not only to reach as far as Euphra-

tes and the Taurus range, but to assemble the remnants of the Armenians in their desolate or alien-inhabited nativeland. The land where the Armenian nation was formed is very old, and old is the nation which created the Armenian literature. We must recognize both the nation and the land.

* * *

Our land is a mighty and sublime mountainous composition. It is isolated. It is smaller in area than Persia on the East, Anatolia in the West, and Mesopotamia in the South. Our classic historian Khorenatzi must have had this in mind when he called our country "a small patch." Armenia is incomparably larger, however, than Georgia and Iberia (Albania) to the North which explains why the same historian said "Our small patch is larger than the general North." From east to west, it extends from Lake Urmia to the Euphrates, and farther, as far as the River Halys. North to south, it stretches from Caucasian range to the steppes of Mesopotamia. The basic characteristics of this spacious land have been its isolation and height. Armenia has been a distant province for the Persian, the Greek and the Arab. To great civilizations, it has always remained a remote silent corner, and so it is today. In the north—Little Caucasus—, it is bordered by towering mountain chains; in the south, it is surrounded by the Taurus range. In the east it is cloven by the high Zagros mountain range, and in the west, by a deep gorge, the source of the Euphrates. On the flanks of these heights reposes a higher mountain land where towering peaks pierce the sky,—Massis (Ararat), Aragatz, and Sipan. Parallel with the bordering chains, from east to west, like a huge dragon, stretches the Armenian range whose two heads, the twin Massises (Ararats), look menacingly to the east, while its tail is lost in the mountainous tangle of Sermantz and Derchan hugged by the two wings of the Euphrates. The whole country is a sheer

thrust into the sky and labyrinth of deep gorges, transfixed by countless streams in all directions which unite into rivers and carry the fatherland's waters to alien lands,—to the Black and Caspian Seas and Mesopotamia. The centuries-old erosions of the Glacial Age, accumulated in the valleys, have been transformed into vast fertile fields,—the Ararat Valley, Taron, and Shirak. In those places where the water has had no outlet, it has formed large or small lakes, such as Van, Sevan, and hundreds of others which, like blue eyes, gaze into the blue above.

Cut off from the outside world, sublimely perched on its heights, and defiant, our country is an extensive network of isolated patches within itself. The countless claws of the slopes of the bordering mountain ranges have scratched up the plateau in the north and the steppes of Mesopotamia in the south. Hundreds of mountain arms, like fists, emerging from the land of Taik, taper off in Chaldea, and in the east, they dangle like tassels in front of Azerbaijan. While a few defiles, mostly through the mountains, enable the outsider to enter this land of difficult access, the country itself is a criss-cross of countless gorges, ravines, and repressions. Through these narrow and dark defiles it is easier to descend into the open plateau than it is to cross from one valley to another. While the course of the waters will lead the traveler along the valley to the outside world, the towering mountains prevent the inhabitants in the adjoining valleys from seeing one another; the extensions of the bordering mountains which, in parallel arms, reach out into the outside world, separate the nestlers in the deep valleys from one another and render impossible any inter-communication. It is easier to descend from Tzopk, Aghtznis, and Demoris into Assyria and Metzbin than to descend Taron and Vaspourakan; likewise, it is easier to descend from Artzakh, Galdmantz, and Gougark into the Valley of Kura than to cross into the plateau of Ararat.

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The inhabitants of the bordering mountain ranges have been compelled to turn their attention to the foreigner, pursuing their own peculiar interests which are alien to the interests of the population of the inland. The inland itself has been divided into countless local isolated islands. The Armenian range cuts through the country, separating the Ararat plateau from Vaspourakan and Taurouberan; the sea and the Gergour range isolate Vaspourakan and Taron. Only the lowlands offer access to free communication but even these are largely separated from one another.

This universal isolation is largely enhanced by the presence of extensive dark forests which form a horse-shoe-shaped belt around the country from Artzakh to Taik, from Taik to Tzopk, from Tzopk to Demoris. Only the slopes and the peaks of the bordering mountains tower above these thick-set forests of bare trees and thickets, punctuated by rich, flower-scented pastures. The inward slopes of the mountains, together with the inland, constitute an extensive pastureland of nature's grass and wild flowers, and orchards and vineyards which have been planted by human hands. The inside isolation is greatly enhanced by the long Armenian winters with their thick layers of snow, especially by those dread "dragon-voiced" winds which force every living creature to seek shelter in their lairs. Not one enemy, nor even a friend, can cross from one isolated island to another during those bleak winters. In the villages which perch on the slopes of these mountains, a man cannot even enter his neighbor's home when the snow in the streets reaches the top of the roofs.

But the soil of our country is fertile; the large and small fields which largely are the product of corroding lava, lend an unusual flavor to the fruit and the vegetables. The pastures are plentiful with grass and wild flowers which lend scent to the butter and the honey, and taste to the mutton and the

beef. The intoxicating smell of newly-baked bread fills the air from the door to the roof. The rivers and the lakes teem with toothsome fish; the woods are filled with birds of all descriptions; the snipe hides in the fields; the partridge frolics among the rocks; the wild boar feeds on his acorns, and the deer struts in the woods. The waters of our country are clear, sparkling and cold, the air is pure and invigorating; our summer breezes blow no dust but sweet scent, they are cool, and they do not whip, they caress the face and the soul. It is no wonder that the sun-bitten inhabitants of waterless and dusty Mesopotamia call Armenia the paradise. It was not for nothing that the celebrated Assyrian Queen Semiramis said of Armenia: "Seeing the beauty of the country, the temperate climate, the clear, sparkling coolness of the springs, and the murmur of the easy-flowing rivers, we must build a city, and a palace for our residence in this land of pure waters and balmy climate, so we can enjoy our summers in Armenia." Thus wrote our classical historian Khorenatzi (Moses of Khorene) in regard to our country fifteen hundred years ago, in echo of the tribute of the foreigners a thousand years before his time.

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In this beautiful and prolific land, from immemorial times, men settled down in the fertile fields, particularly on the slopes of the proud mountains, the deep valleys, and on the shores of the lakes. Undoubtedly, these came after the Glacial Age, but whence? And by what track? No one definitely can say. There have been no extensive excavations in our country, particularly the south and the west which still lie unexplored, but those which have been carried out have shown that our country was inhabited as early as the New Stone Age. The sites of the huge forts hewn in the rock, the many one-piece and jutting statues on this or that level, the sculptures and the inscriptions on

the rocks and on the walls of caves, all attest the presence of a civilization in Armenia prior to the Urartuan and Armenian civilizations. The decorations on utensils made of shell are indicative of a distinct art, the various forms of burial portrayed on the utensils prove the existence of religion, and the instruments used attest the presence of a distinct level of civilization. These traces have been found in the valleys of Gardman, near Ganzak, around Aragatz, on its slopes and base near Erivan, in the regions of Kotaik and Siunik, around Lake Sevan and elsewhere. These aborigines lived in small groups in their tribal manner of life.

Scientists tell us that, in the prehistoric era, the highlands of anterior Asia, from the Mediterranean Sea to the Iranian plateau, were inhabited by men of medium height as well as dolichocephalic (long-headed). This is a true picture of the Armenians today. So were the men who lived in our country before the appearance of the Urartuans and, therefore have proved that our country was also inhabited by tall and dolichocephalic human groups. This is a characteristic of northern nations and perhaps it is their trace which we observe on the Armenians of today. It must be presumed, however, that the numbers of these were not so many as to effect the shape of our skulls, but there must have been enough of them to account for the difference in stature; a part of our nation is taller than medium height. It is the dolichocephalous (long-headed) and medium-height element, however, which has triumphed on our country. This is true of the Urartuans and the Hittites with whom our nation has been closely linked. The Hittite sculpture of human forms are remarkably like the Armenians. Egyptian sculptures of Hatti faces confirm the same thing. Thus, whatever the origin of the Armenians, their physical form is typical of Asia Minor.

The faith and the customs of present day Armenians have preserved numerous traces

of a mentality and manners which are typical of the prehistoric man. The worship of rocks, trees and springs presuppose a tribal life and a totemistic organization when a certain group of men regarded an animal or a plant as their ancestor. There are traces of polyandry, as well as of matriarchate, which are ancient forms of social organization. Where did the Armenian nation live during the formation of the civilization of the New Stone Age,—the oldest period of social organization? No one can say. The historic Armenian makes his appearance with clearly-defined class distinctions and the patriarchy as opposed to matriarchy. The same was true of the Urartuan who had a federal government and numerous gods, whereas, the Armenian of today believes only in spirits and trusts in sorcery, both of which are the oldest form of religion. Our popular faith has not yet been fully explored, only the material has been collected and classified. We can definitely assert, however, that that faith not only was transmitted to us by those elements which infiltrated our country, but the aborigines who had lived in the land during the Bronze Age. The Armenian nation, therefore, is the direct offshoot of prehistoric man.

Furthermore, we have rational testimonies in regard to these aborigines. According to Khorenatzi and the tradition of his sources which he put into writing, our country was inhabited before the advent of Haik. When our ancestor migrated to the north, "he first settled down on a mountain plateau which was sparsely inhabited. He subdued these natives, settled down on the land, and dispensed an inheritance to Katmos, the son of Armenak (his grandson)." The historian adds: "This (the circumstance of Armenia being inhabited before the advent of Haik) is supported by unwritten ancient tales" which goes to prove at least rumor had it that Armenia was populated during the pre-Haikian era.

Haik moved to the north as far as the future province of Hark where he built Haikashen. "The story was prevalent here," continues the chronicler Khorenatzi, "that the southern part of this plateau (namely Hark), near a sprawling mountain, was formerly inhabited by a small number of aborigines who voluntarily submitted to the rule of our hero (Haik). This story further supports the unwritten rumors." In another place, Khorenatzi makes the general observation: "But the historian (the source of Khorenatzi) tells in no uncertain terms that many parts of our country were inhabited by sparse, scattered groups, before the advent of Haik." Thus we see that, according to the ancient legend, Haik (namely the Armenians) came to our country where he found a small number of natives whom he subdued by force or voluntarily, meaning, the native population was not annihilated. What kind of men were these, who were subdued or voluntarily accepted their fate? We do not know. They no longer exist as a distinct community, race, or nation; therefore, they must have been assimilated by the newcomers. And since the rumor of Haik is Urartuan, it is patent that the aborigines must have merged with the newcomer Urartuans. On the other hand, we do not know if the Armenians who later invaded our country, exterminated the Urartuans. According to Xenophon, the Armenians must have driven them toward the mountains and later permitted them to descend to the lowlands where they lived peacefully side by side until they were completely assimilated. Only those who withdrew to Chaldea still remember the historic era. It is highly probable that the Armenians too did not annihilate the native population but assimilated them. The Urartuan origin of a number of princely dynasties is proof of the survival of the nobility of the native element who continued to live and rule as Armenians.

What were those races which lived in our

country before the advent of the Urartuans and the Armenians? Khorenatzi has preserved an ancient tradition in regard to this matter too. The rumor pertains to southwestern Armenia as far as Taron. Khorenatzi heard it from learned Armenians of Greek training who, in turn, had heard it from Greek scientists in Greece. The legend follows:

"When Xisuthros (Noah) sailed to Armenia, after the landing, one of his sons who was called Sim journeyed to the north-west to observe the country. Here, near a sprawling mountain which looked toward Assyria, he came across a small flat land which was intersected by rivers. He stopped near the river for two months, called the mountain Sim after his name, then he returned south-east whence he had come. But one of his younger sons, named Tarban, together with thirty sons and fifteen daughters and their families, separated from his father and squatted near the river. The province was called Taron after his name, while the immediate spot where he settled was called Tzronk, indicating his separation from his father. But more often these things are related by the elders of the Aramazouns during their festivals to the accompaniment of songs and dances and their orchestras of bells and cymbals."

Taron and Sim are in Armenia: the Aramazouns are the Armenians who, as we have seen, have commemorated in their songs and dances the existence of a colony which entered Taron and built the village of Tzronk. These were the son and the grandchildren of Sem (Shem) who later were dispersed in Armenia.

"They also tell of Tarban that he stayed a short while near the border of the Bactrians and that one of his sons remained behind." According to this story, there must have been a sort of kinship between Bactria in north-east Persia and the colony which entered Armenia from the south. According

to Biblical ethnology, Sem (Shem) was the ancestor of Semitic nations who lived south of Armenia. But what business had the Semitic race in Bactria? What other race could have entered Armenia from the south? I am of the opinion that these were the Mitanni who were the masters of northern Mesopotamia fifteen hundred years before Christ. It seems to me the two legends have been merged into one another: one pertaining to the Semitic migration as attested by Sem Mountain; and the other, pertaining to the Mitanni migration which can be traced to Bactrian memories. It was during this period that Indo-European peoples moved to Mesopotamia via the Iranian plateau to the east. Another reminder of the Semitic infiltration of our country, in my opinion, is Thomas Arzrouni's saying about the inhabitants of Khoith that "they are offshoots (krehk) of the Assyrians." Sim is that part of Taurus which separates Taron and Khoith from Aghtznik. These legends which lived in the memory of the Aramazouns independently of the Biblical account, in my opinion, are withered memories of historical events and that the aborigines of Taron were Semites. In the course of time they were Armenianized but as a matter of tradition they preserved the memory of their immigration from the south. How far did these elements expand in Armenia is not known, but according to rumor Tarban's sons separated from him at Tzronk, no doubt with the intention of spreading in the neighboring regions. Precisely that way was the expansion of Haik's offspring who entered Armenia after the coming of Tarban.

No matter what their origin, these aborigines who lived in our country from immemorial times and whose blood now courses through our veins, inevitably bore the imprint of our fatherland. The primitive economy which utilized nature's gifts, kept man in perpetual contact with nature. The daily bread had to be eked out that very day.

The men were hunters and the women collectors; the men caught wild animals and fish, and the women gathered plants and seed. Both were in constant motion; one away from home, the other around the skirts of the home. Their habitat were the caves, the hollow of the rocks, and subterranean dens. In the morning the men folk took their bows and flint-capped arrows, and walked away, individually or in groups, to the hunt. They chased the fleeing game, leaped from rock to rock after the wild goat, tracked the wild boar into the swamps, followed the bear into the woods, and strode through the lanes of the forests and the open fields in quest of the deer. Others went fishing in the rivers and the lakes. Frequently, they devoured their prey on the spot; sometimes they brought it home with ceremonious merry-making. The women explored the neighboring woods, the bushes, the thickets and the verdant pastures, in search of berries and seed with which they nurtured their children. At dusk, they returned to their caves and dens, closed the entrance against wild beasts, and kept the fire going. This was the way they lived from the beginning of spring until late fall; during the daytime under the skies, in the night, after their repast, in the darkness of the caves. Life was hard in the winter, when mountain and valley were covered with a blanket of snow and game left the fields and the woods. Food was scarce, and old or young were stricken with starvation.

Such a devouring economy was not conducive to human growth and multiplication. They lived their tribal life in small groups. But this mode of life developed a strong physique, a rugged body, agile movement, a sharp eye, and an unerring blow. It sharpened the mind and concentrated the attention to observe the habits of the game animals, their cunning, their devices of escape, and their manner of life during the seasons. They developed the art of trapping. Collective hunting taught them synchronization of

attack; collective merry-making harmonized the hearts. By degrees, hunting developed a new type of man,—the warrior and the leader. The women, in their quest of daily bread, came to recognize the different species of trees and fruits, as well as the nutritive and healing properties of the plants. Thus, they accumulated knowledge and experience which have been transmitted to us from ancient times, and which constitute the reservoir of our mind and life.

Again, it was during this period that the greater part of our legends were formed, the very same legends which our peasants relate. A considerable number of these have been collected, but they have not yet been explored in the light of their ancient setting. It is the man of this era who regarded the cloud and the mist as living creatures. The black cloud, with its thunder seemed to him a huge beast which darted against the sun for the hunting while the storm and the lightning were the mighty blows of the club with which the sun tore asunder the formidable beast. This mentality is the father of the legend about the animals which has condensed the knowledge and experience of man as a hunter and which has ascribed to animals a human mind, feelings, and mode of life. The legends which tell of orphaned babies who roamed about the woods, and girls, who, having found shelter in the caverns, placated the beast like dwellers in human form, are all memories of the ancient life. From this period also stem those stories about the giants which are not mere inferences or deductions, namely, figments of the imagination dictated by the sight of huge fortifications, but memories of a onetime reality.

Nor must we be confused by the fact that we do not know what was the language of these ancient inhabitants. The philological structure is more permanent than the language with which it has been clothed. Human groups change their language but they continue to relate their old legends with their

new language. Such, too, are the ways of life; the fishing net and the bait have come to us from ancient times, although we do not know by what names the ancients called these implements which have been bequeathed to us. The legends, the tales, and the saga should be analyzed as the reflection of life, regardless of the language. The proverbs of India have traveled to Europe where they have taken root among entire nations and have been retold in countless languages, still they are the product of primitive life. Passed on from mouth to mouth, these compositions often bear the stamp of centuries. Sometimes, they have become component parts of a new composition,—take for example the explosion of fire from the finger in the legend of David of Sassoun; whereas, this conception is very old and is characteristic of primitive mentality. The thing called folk philology must be explored in strata with a view to discovering its original form, the changes it has undergone under the influence of successive forms of life, and drawing the parallel between the mode of life and the philological structures. In their purified form, these legend stories and tales form the first chapter of literature. It is impossible for me to write that chapter. That would require an extensive and deep research of germaine subjects, and a comparative study in order to determine the original and the byproduct, and to outline the primitive mentality of the Armenian nation. It is this mentality which still lives among the humble strata as a living and active reality, as faith and science.

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In this land of primitive human groups of ours, other elements have succeeded who lived not a tribal, but a racial life. These were the builders of those forts of unhewn stone which speckle the surface of our country, as well as those towering obelisks which are symbolic of the worship of a man's genital organs. These, I think, were monuments of

the patriarchate,—a social organization in which the authority of the family lay in the father's hand and inheritance was transmitted down along the paternal line. It also seems to me those rooflike structures of flat stone which lean against the steep obelisks are the work of ancient tribes. I am of the opinion that these structures, whose meaning is not yet clear to the archaeologists, were the meeting places of ancient tribes where the patriarchs, each leaning against his own rock, sat in session, and passed judgement on general questions pertaining to the tribe. Hence, they must have been the result of collective and federated business. This business presumably had to do not only with the existence of the tribe, but the existence of a group of tribes who were accustomed to collective activity, proving that they were not entirely isolated but were affiliated with one another. The same business presupposes linguistic unity and mutual influence in daily life. It is difficult to say whether it was the ancient tribes who slowly developed this new social organization, or it was the newcomers who imposed their organization on the aborigines. There is another question which cannot definitely be answered, it pertains to those human groups who succeeded the masters of the unhewn stone. These were familiar with the use of metals and the hewn stone is frequently noticed in their structures. It was these who dug for themselves dwelling places in the rocks and carved symbols and drawings on the walls. It was they who constructed streams on the slopes of Aragatz and hewed dragons (fishes of stone). This is quite a high level of culture compared with the past. This culture is pre-Urartuan with an inscription of its own which is quite unique, entirely different from the cuneiform of Hittite inscriptions. This culture was developed on the Plain of Ararat, in Shirak, and on the banks of Sevan. It presupposes a distinct governmental structure, accumulated wealth,

and even perhaps slave labor which was used on these various enterprises. The hewn stone, the engravings on the walls and the inscriptions presuppose the existence of craftsmen, conceivers of great projects, an intellectual stratum which invented the inscriptions and the practice in arts, as attested by the engraved drawings on the rocks. Whether these were executed through the medium of bronze or iron, the fact remains the craftsmen were familiar with metals and the design and use of instruments.

What was the origin of these men who created this culture, what language did they speak? We know nothing about it. What we can definitely affirm is that we are the inheritors of that culture. That people has not fully disappeared from among us but has survived among us in the form of habit and essential experiment. Their chosen sites of fortification have served the Armenians as their fortresses, the streams they opened have irrigated the fields and the orchards of the Armenians, it is their trade and arts which have been transmitted to the new population of the country. The races and their mode of life have changed, but their culture has continued to remain, beginning from the New Stone Age to the historic era. The Armenians who were supposed to have been herdsmen when they entered our country, in the course of time became hewers of stone and metal workers, not through the process of historic evolution; but they appropriated the cultural inheritance of the country which they conquered. This fact presupposes that the aborigines of the land did not disappear entirely, but were subjugated and assimilated by the newcomers, even as the aborigines of our land had been subjugated by Haik.

The complete picture of these primitive cultures has not been made fully clear. Our country has not been sufficiently excavated and explored as to bring to light all the fortress sites, all the remains of structural

monuments, the structures on the rocks, the engravings, the inscriptions, the symbols and the drawings. What is more, those elements of our spiritual heritage which have come down to us from this or that period of our primitive culture, are still unexplored. A great part of Armenian place names cannot be interpreted through the Armenian language; this is also true of many tribal names. Many of these names have come down to us from the Urartuan era, although there are many place names which have been transmitted from the primitive era to the Urartuans and, hence, were coined by the aborigines of the primitive era, and most likely they are names of tribes, such as Akhourian which, in the language of cuneiforms, is a place name, but in the Armenian language it is the name of a river. The religion of the Armenians has a light stratum of Christianity, very few traces of Mazdaism, but large streaks of prehistory. The customs, implements, utensils, and the economy of the Armenians are much older than Armenian history and are the heritage of ancient centuries and tribal groups. The population has changed its masters and language, but has preserved the old ideals and mode of life. When the Armenian grandmother in time of hail throws out the griddle, or when the man in time of thunder strikes his waist with a stone, these are no new phenomena which they have created, but is inherited from their prehistoric religion. It is difficult precisely to say from what particular period of ancient culture a certain custom, a certain idea, or a certain conception has come down to us. Only minute and comparative research can answer this question.

Although by inference, we can nevertheless say without hesitation that the physical, as well as the spiritual structure of the Armenian people can be traced back to immemorial centuries. The intellectual and sentimental revolution which Christianity inflicted upon the Armenian people left a perceptible im-

pression upon the upper classes but it never dominated the common masses. It was the prehistoric man who lived in the Armenian of the Golden Age, and it is the same man who lives in our common man of today. Nationality preeminently is a philological phenomenon; by changing the language nations have turned into another nation, but they have continued to retain a large share of their prehistoric heritage. The natives of Armenia have been Armenianized, but it is the same natives who continue to live to this day. The habits, the customs, the ideas and the conceptions are the same although clothed in the Armenian language.

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It is on this substructure of tribal and racial culture that the Urartuan civilization rests like a new thick layer. For at least three centuries the disciples of the gods of Khaldi directed the destiny of our country. The federation of separate tribes of that period became an extensive and mighty state which confronted the Assyrian. The Khald was a newcomer, and not a native. The Khalds lived in northern Mesopotamia, on and around the *Massius* chain of mountains, and driven northward under the blows of Assyria, forced their way into our country from the south. They advanced as far as Hark (the region of Khnous) and when they were sufficiently strong, led by Arame, they began the conquest of the land which they completed through continued incursions under successive kings. This ruling tribe subjugated and amalgamated the native tribal groups into a mighty and extensive state. Thereafter, the native gods revolved around the Khaldic god, even as the native races revolved around the Khaldic races. The city of Van with its chambers hewn in the rocks is the work of the Khalds, as well as the stream known by the name of Shamiran which flows to this day. It was they who left behind hundreds of cuneiform inscriptions on rocks and monuments, now scattered all over Ar-

menia. They were hewers of stone and metal workers; warriors and tillers of the soil. They had mansions and temples, citadels and cities. They emerged in history as a warlike people who not only defended their country against external aggression, but actually took the field in the south, east and west, against Assyria and the Hittite empire, and in the north as far as Shirak and Sevan. They were the builders of Armavir in the plain of Ararat which in all probability was a military post restraining the rebellious tribes of the north who were the aborigines of our country. The physical relics they left behind are proof of a definite art, even as their constructions attest an advanced architecture. They borrowed the cuneiform but they dignified it with a stamp of their own. Individuality and independence is strongly discernible in all their works, characteristics which have been accentuated by the inaccessibility of mountainous Armenia.

Who were these men who created this high civilization? The Assyrians call their original habitation, which is on and around the *Masrius* range, *NAIRI* which is supposed to mean the land of rivers. Thirteen centuries before Christ, they were subjected to Assyrian invasions which they resisted for a long time, but eventually were forced to withdraw to the north and find shelter in the fastnesses of our mountains. We know nothing definite about the origin of these tribal groups. It is quite possible that they were Mitanni tribes or Kassites, who likewise were masters of northern Mesopotamia. The language of the Urartuans is not considered Indo-European, but, likewise, it is not definitely known what was the language of the Mitannis and the Kassites. The religion of the Mitannis has Indo-European gods, and Indo-European elements are perceptible in proper names, but that much is not enough to prove that they spoke the Indo-European language. The Persians are Mohamedans, but they are not Semites; their names are Mehmed and

Ali, and yet they are Aryans and speak an Indo-European language. The name of one Urartuan king is Sardour (*Sarduria*) whose suffix is the same as the one in the Armenian proper name *Khatchatour*, and *tour* is Indo-European. The name of another king is *Rusas* which contains the equivalent of the word *louys* (light), namely *russ*. One of the Mitanni gods is called *Teshoup* which is supposed to be the Armenian word *Tosp*; while *Tosp* is in the region of Van. Religion, proper names, and many words can only testify to the influence which has been exerted. The fact that the language of the Urartuans is not considered Indo-European is no reason why the component elements of that people should not be the Mitannis and the Kassites. These one-time powerful tribes have been subjected to ruinous blows and have been subjugated, but they have never disappeared; their perpetual revolts testify to their existence even at the time when they had ceased to be masters of Mesopotamia. It is not impossible that these former masters withdrew to the north, into our country, where, having encountered weaker tribes, conquered them and took over their country. In Mesopotamia, which is considered the cradle of civilization, through their military or pacific contacts with their neighbors, these tribes no doubt assimilated and further developed those cultural advantages by which they emerged victorious in our mountainland. It was these Mesopotamians who later flourished, and under the influence of their new environment, acquired a distinct character in their new country. Under the supremacy of one of the tribes called Aramaians, this people created a state and conquered our country and the inhabitants. It conquered, but could not wholly assimilate them. Even during the latter part of their supremacy, the tribes which lived in the north of our country were still in a state of rebellion. The prisoners which were transplanted to this or that region were of

course merged in the Khaldic element, but the habitat of the rebels was never depopulated; they were merely subdued.

From all indications, the northern and north-western region of Armenia was inhabited by another people who occupied the slopes of Aragatz, the environs of Shirak and Sevan, the land of the Siunis, and in the west, Kars, Karin, and the upper valley of Arax.

Who were these people? Hittite inscriptions speak of a people which were called Haiasa and who lived in Lesser Armenia to the east. Some think, and this is very probable, that these were the oldest Armenians. It seems to me, this people very early migrated eastward, along the Euphrates, and later, having entered the valley of Arax and the plain of Kars, occupied Shirak, the plain of Ararat, and the region of Sevan. It is these whom the Urartuans conquered, and it is these who were in perpetual revolt against the Urartuans. Thus, to me, the ethnographical map of Armenia during the reign of the Urartuans presents the following picture: the north of our country was held by the Hiasians who were divided into separate tribes; they were the upper stratum of the natives of our land who had migrated during the New Stone Age and who still continued to live their tribal life. The center and the south, from the Armenian Chain to the Taurus, and from the Burakn Mountains to Persian Armenia, was held by the Urartuans who likewise constituted the superstratum over the natives of these regions who had migrated during the New Stone Age. The racial structure of the Hiasians and the Urartuans had overcome the tribal structure of the natives. When the confederation of the Urartuan tribes became a central state under the leadership of one of the tribes called Arame, the new state organization launched its fight against the racial organizations. The Urartuan tribes succeeded in subjugating and assimilating the tribes of their

regions, but they only temporarily subdued the Hiasians; they never succeeded in assimilating them. It seems to me the Hiasians were sufficiently strong and civilized to resist assimilation, but they lacked a state organization with which to resist the Urartuans and to preserve their independence. The position of the Hiasians as regards the Urartuans was analogous to the position of the Urartuans as regards the Assyrians. The Hiasians were independent tribes, while the Urartuans were an organized state. The state conquered the tribes, but the conqueror could not destroy the identity of the Haiasian tribes. And when Urartu fell, Haiasa took over. This great event, which is the dawn of our history, took place seven centuries before Christ.

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It is difficult to say precisely that traits of Khaldic tribes have survived in our people because authentic testimony in this respect is very meager. Likewise, it is difficult to say which elements of our popular religion (faith) can definitely be regarded as Urartuan. The only thing which we can affirm with assurance is the transition of their national legend to the Armenians—the legend of Haik and his offspring. The Urartuan adopted the Armenian language through the medium of which he transmitted his legend; thus he was Armenianized. And right here it becomes necessary in passing to enter into the examination of a few questions.

The foremost among these is the question of the Armenians. It is generally believed there was a people by this name who were the ancient Hai's or Haik (the Armenians call themselves Hai—singular; Haik—plural; and their country Haiastan; the outsiders call them Armenians and their country Armenia—Tr.). The general opinion is that these entered Armenia from the west and established their kingdom on the ruins of the Urartuan state. The names of this people and their country for the first time appear in the inscription of Darius as Armina and

Arminiya. Similar or near similar other names in Urartuan or Assyrian inscriptions are likewise thought probably to refer to the Armenians, however, the inscription of Darius is the only one which leaves no doubt that Armina is our country and Arminiya is the inhabitant of that country. On the other hand, no one knows if the inhabitants of our country applied this name to themselves at the time of Darius. These are the names which the Persian has given to us. One century before the inscription of Darius the masters of our country were the Khaldians. What did the Persians and the Medes call our country and its inhabitants at that time? Personally, I think they called it by same names: Armina and Arminiya. In this matter, I think our historian Khorenatzi is right; our country and its people were known by the name Aram, namely Armina and Arminiya. The Greeks took these names from the Persians and made it the property of the entire world. It was during the reign of the Arame tribe that Armenia became known as a separate country and a strong government. And it was the Medes who first came into contact with that country. The Persians were far removed from our land, although it is not impossible that they should have learned far to the north and west of their country there was another land which was lived and ruled by the Arame tribe.

The fact that Arame is phonetic and complete while Armina is contracted is no reason why it should not be assumed that the latter is a derivative of the former as a contraction of Aramina. This contraction may be regarded as a coinage of the Medes and the Persians. There is not a single trace to prove that the natives called themselves by those names. Dadarshish was the name of the Armenian whom King Darius sent to suppress an insurrection of the Armenians; so was Arakha an Armenian, who temporarily became master of Babylon; but neither Dadarshish or Arakha is an Armenian name.

Neither the Urartuan called himself an Armenian nor the Hai who succeeded him.

In the Babylonian copy of Darius' inscription our country is called Urastu which is considered as a perversion of Urartu. The same country is Armena for the Persian and Urartu for the Babylonian. The latter name also comes to us from the Khaldic period. After the fall of the Urartuan supremacy the dominant race and people of Armenia was changed, but to neighboring nations both the country and the people still bore their former names. There never has been a people called Armenians in our country who came from the west and subdued the Urartuan land. There is no authentic proof for this theory. Arminia and Armina are Iranian words; they are not Armenian words. It was the Mede and the Persian who gave those names to our country and people at the time when our country was ruled by the tribe of Arame. It is quite probable that Armina meant the land of Arame, and Arminiya, an Armenian national.

I am^{of} of the opinion that the Haik (Armenians) are the Hiasians who originally occupied the northern part of our country and who, after the disintegration of the Urartuan dynasty, descended from their mountain heights, and having crossed the Armenian Range, occupied the central tableland, and drove the remnants of the Khalds to the mountain. That was the picture of our country at the time of Cyrus. It was at this time, I believe, that the Khalds of northern Armenia were likewise driven to Chaldea. These Armenians could not have been the authors of the Armenian legend, for in the legend the tribe of Haik advances from the south to the north, while the Haiaas had entered Armenia from the west and having lived there for a long time, only after the fall of the Urartuans did they move southward, toward Van and the environs.

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The Armenian legend is a creation of the

Uartuans. It is not unlikely that Khorenatzi or his source should have linked it with the building of the tower, although that is of no consequence. The important thing is that Haik's tribe moved from the south in its effort to escape the tyranny of a southern power. Such were the inhabitants of Nairi who fled from the tyranny of the Assyrians to the mountainland of Armenia. Haik first settled in the land of Kordjaik, still in the neighborhood of his former habitation. Thereafter, he pushed upwards and reached Hark, the county from which Arame began the conquest of our land. Haik's war with Belus which took place in the Armenian Valley, in my opinion, is a historical *memory* left from the period of conquest when the tribe of Arame occupied Van and the environs and purged it of alien elements. Haik's son crossed over to the Plain of Ararat along the upper course of Arax River; and his offspring by degrees occupied Shirak and the land of the Siunis. In all these places, to this day there are inscriptions which speak of the Uartuan supremacy. A few of the names of this imperialistic tribe are Uartuan and have been recorded in the cuneiform inscriptions, such as Arame (our Aram) and Menuas who is the Manavaz of our legend. In all the places where our legend says Haik's offspring built fortifications, exploration has found both fortifications and inscriptions. The legend says there were sparse tribes in our country who were subdued by Haik. We have already seen that there was a civilization in Armenia before the advent of the Uartuans. The central figure of the legend is Aram who was the founder of the Khaldic state. All the conquests which extended the boundaries of the Uartuan state have been connected with the name of Aram in the legend; it was he who conquered the Medes in the east, Barsham the Assyrian in the south, and reached as far as Caesarea in the west. Uartuan inscriptions testify of such invasions, although their director is not

Aram but his successors.

The legend of Haik was repeated by the Armenians for more than one thousand years and only afterwards was put into writing. Its first editor states that the legend is taken from the oral tradition. In such a long time it is natural that the legend should be subjected to certain changes, laden with fresh layers of the experience and the mentality of succeeding generations; but there is no doubt that the core of the legend is of Uartuan origin; it has to do with the advent of the Uartuans into our country and their conquests. And as the Hiasians took over the Uartuan land and state, they also adopted their legend. This proves that the greater mass of the Armenian people are Uartuans who preserved their legend as they did many of their princely dynasties, but having been Armenianized in both language and national spirit, thereafter they related and sang their national legend as Armenian and in the Armenian language.

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We do not know much about the Hiasians. The presumption is that they were a segment of the Hittites or a people of Asia Minor which bore a deep Hittite imprint. They lived in Lesser Armenia but no one knows how far they expanded in the east. Equally limited is knowledge of those Armenians who became the masters of our country after the fall of the Uartuans. At the time of Cyrus (559-529) we see one Armenian king in the east of Armenia who was trying to shed off the Median yoke, had stopped paying tribute, and was building fortifications contrary to his agreement. Was he the first Armenian king? And was it in his time that the country was subjected to the Median rule? We do not know. The time he lived is very close to the fall of the Uartuan state. He had a grown son by the name of Tigran (Tigranes) who was newly married, and had grown up with Cyrus in the court of Media. Hence, the Armenian king was an aged man,

who was born king in the beginning of the sixth century. His military force is estimated at 40,000 infantry and a cavalry of 5,000. Such a force could have been raised by a people which was seven to eight times more numerous than its fighters. Where was this people at the time of the Uartuans? There is no mention of the Armenians in Uartuan inscriptions. Sarduris, the last king of the Uartuans, lived at the time of Ashurbanipal (668-638), hence, scarcely one hundred years separates Tigranes and this last king. Moreover, it is still a matter of dispute whether Sarduris was the last king of the Uartuans. Some suppose he was succeeded by two other kings. Although Armenia and Armenians for the first time appear in Darius' inscription of 521, we see that at the time of Cyrus there was an Armenian king in the land who made a pact with the Medes and paid them tribute. The participation of the Armenians with the invasions of Cyrus is now regarded as an indisputable fact. The end of the Uartuans and the appearance of the Armenians are so close that many are tempted to identify the two people. Furthermore, it is still a question whether Armina is the whole of Armenia, or only a part of it, the eastern part which was the future Persian Armenia. Some think Armina is none other than Ar-Mina, namely, the land of the Minnis which the Bible has mentioned in connection with the "Kingdom of Ararat." Ninevah was destroyed in 606 and it was in this connection that the prophet Jeremiah sent a call to the kingdoms of Ararat, Minna, and Ashchenaz (Askanazian). The Assyrian has translated Minni into "Armenians," having conceived Ar-Minna as Armina. About fifty to sixty years later Cyrus meets the Armenian king and his son Tigranes in Minna and Ashchenaz. At the time of the Uartuans, Manna or Minna (Minni) is their ally and therefore is an independent state. In the Bible it is recorded as a distinct kingdom, while at the time of Cyrus the king of

the Armenians is seen building fortifications. Are the Minnis and the kingdoms of Ashchenaz and Ararat different peoples? Or are they the same nation with different names like Zok and Vorshik who are Armenians, the ancient Goghtnetzis and Reshtountzis? I am of the opinion the latter theory is more probable, and that the Medes and the Persians called our country Ar-Mina, and the inhabitants Armenians.

Where were the Armenians at the time of the Cimmerian invasions in the seventh century who passed through our country in the north, and even left behind some of their numbers in Shirak (Koumairi—Kyumri—and Alexandropol, now Leninakan)? That is to say, they passed along those places which once was the land of the Armenians and which perhaps continued to remain the land of their offspring at the time of the Cimmerians. Where was the people of Tigranes' father at the time of the Scythian invasion which in the seventh century scraped up the eastern part of our country, and a part of whom settled down in the north east? Presumably these invasions further disintegrated the Uartuan kingdom which was already exhausted from the long fight it had waged against the Assyrians. The invading barbarians no doubt destroyed the Uartuan military posts all of which were cities with plenty of loot. And it was the Uartuan soldier who had to face these bandits in defense of his country and rule. It was the Uartuan nobility which supplied the military force, and it was this nobility which was destroyed in the unequal struggle. The subject race, which in my opinion were the Hiasians, undoubtedly sought shelter in the mountains together with its tribal and racial chiefs. The Uartuan was the upper stratum in the north of our land. He was a stranger in the north of the Armenian Range, the Plain of Ararat, Shirak and Siunik, whereas the Hiasian was the owner and the dweller of these lands, once conquered by the Ur-

artuan. I am of the opinion that it was the Hiasians who created the pre-Urartuan culture of our country—the buildings and strongholds of hewn stone, the inscriptions and the engravings, the dragons of stone, and the streams on the slopes of the mountains. Their social structure and culture prove that they had long since abandoned their jungle economy and had turned into herdsmen and tillers of the soil. This is attested by the booties of the Urartuans. Such an economy was capable of supporting a dense population on such a comparatively small area. Thus, the Hiasians namely the Armenians, thanks to their unique economy, had multiplied into numerous tribes in the north of our country. As a political organization, they were weak as compared with the Urartuans, because they lived a tribal life, but as a cultural unit, and as population, they no doubt presented a formidable force. Only in this way can we explain the perpetual revolts of these regions against the supremacy of the Urartuans.

Furthermore, it is a question how far the Hiasians had extended in our country. Who were they who lived in the region of Van, to the east and the west, before the advent of Aram and his successors? Is it not possible that the Urartuan was a stranger and the upper layer in the same land which is known by the name of Urartu? It seems to me the Hiasians, as tribes, had occupied the larger part of our country, more densely crowded in the north, but still in considerable numbers throughout the whole country. The Nairis who came from the south slowly subdued them and took possession of the country. When the ruling stratum, which was Urartuan, weakened and disintegrated, the Hiasians who inhabited the land before the advent of the Urartuans, took over. Only in this way can we explain the presence of a sufficiently strong government in our country immediately after the downfall of the Urartuans and before the coming of Cyrus. The

fact that mention is made of the presence of different people in our country is no reason why these could not have been the various tribes of the same people. Variance of names is a sign of different racial groups, but not necessarily a sign of the union of different languages and cultures. Arakhlou, Tharakhoma, Karapapakh are different names, but all are Tartars who live in the north of Armenia, speak the same language and have the same culture.

The fact that there are Urartuan names and place names in north Armenia which bear no Armenian stamp, and could not have given birth to future names, cannot be accepted as a decisive objection. Subject peoples have adopted the names of their conquerors; a Kartman prince is called Khosrov, the Prince of Vaspourakan is called Shavasp, both Persian names, although the bearers are Armenians. The name of Darius' general is Dadarshish and the name of the despot of Babylon is Arakha, the son of Khaldi, but both are Arminas, or Armenians, in the opinion of those who consider Armina as Armenia, or Haik (Armenians). Likewise, the fact that Urartuan inscriptions are not in the Armenian language is no proof that the greater mass of the population of our country were not Hiasians. The conqueror wrote his inscriptions in his own language, because it was he who read it, and it was for his offspring that he was leaving his monument. Byzantine and Roman inscriptions in Armenia are no proof that our country was not inhabited by Armenians from end to end. Presumably, the Urartuans were not a populous people as compared with the population of our country. In a question of rule, the important thing is not the numbers but the organization. The Osmanli was not numerous, but he became the master of Asia Minor. The Urartuans were lucky because they succeeded in replacing the former tribal federation by a government which was founded on the supremacy of the ruling tribe,

and therefore, directed by a powerful will. It was this fact that settled the political fate of the aborigines who lived an independent tribal life and, therefore, were unable to resist the impact of a government. But when, as a result of circumstances, the ruling race and its government succumbed, the subject took the place of the ruler, but this time not as a multitude of independent tribes, but as a new government, based on the same foundations as the Urartuans, and if anything, even stronger, because it was made up of a homogenous people with one language and one culture.

Thus, it seems to me the Urartuan was a newcomer to our country who ruled for a few centuries, just like the Armenians in Cilicia during the reign of the Rubenians, or the Parthians in Armenia in the days of Nero. The swift Armenianization of the Urartuans must be explained by the long life which they lived side by side with the native Hiasians. And so was Armenianized the Parthian, who was a stranger to our country, and although the conqueror, he was eventually swallowed up by the natives.

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In summing up what I have said and what I know, this is the picture of population movements in our country of ancient times. During the New Stone Age, the whole of our country was populated by human groups whose origin is unknown. Most of them were from Asia Minor, but there also were elements from the north. They lived a tribal life whose law was the law of the jungle. Thereafter, Semitic elements from the south entered the country and occupied the south and the central plain. Almost simultaneously, 12 centuries before Christ, the Hiasians from the west, and the Nairi from the south infiltrated the land, both of which lived a tribal life, namely, shepherds and tillers of the soil. The Nairis were fleeing from the Assyrians, seeking refuge in our inaccessible mountains; while the Hiasians

probably spread by peaceful penetration. The Hiasians were affiliated with the peoples of Asia Minor, or were a segment of Hittites, or bore the heavy linguistic and cultural impress of that powerful people. In Asia Minor they were quite a populous element, strong enough to cross swords with the Hittites. They came and seized the northern and central regions of our country (Ayrarat, Bagrevand, Shirak and Siunik), and as a ruling layer, they superimposed themselves on the ancient, scattered, and small-numbered tribes. They were familiar with the use of metals and introduced the usage of hewn stones.

The Nairis from Mesopotamia probably were Mitanni tribes, likewise shepherds and farmers. At first they retired in the mountainous regions of the south—the Gordyene Mountains and the southern slopes of Taurus, then pushed upwards as far as Hark (the region of Khnous) and settled in the west and north of Lake Van. They had tried to defend the land of Nairi, their life and property, against the Assyrians, by tribal federation but they had failed. The federal organization of the Assyrians had defeated the tribal federation of the Nairis as an organization. Under the blows of same Assyria, the Nairis finally formed a central state which started to conquer our country. Having moved to the western shore of Lake Van and further south-west, they fortified the rock of Van and Biana (the city of Van) which they converted into their capital. Meanwhile they invaded the north and west, occupied the Plain of Ararat, Shirak and Siunik (Sevan), entered the region of Karin (Erzeroum), and by way of Aratzani they reached Balou and farther.

Strengthened by the extension of her boundaries and the captured prisoners and the loot, Urartu now became a powerful state and a dangerous competitor of Assyria from whose oppression she had fled to the north. She subjugated the Hiasian tribes. Three

centuries later she tried to stem the Scythian and Cimmerian tides, but she was already exhausted by the long struggle with Assyria whose supremacy she had accepted. Even Assyria could not stand the shock of these northern barbarians; it is not a surprise, therefore, that Urartu collapsed as a state and her nobility and warriors were torn to pieces. It was at this time that the Hiasians, who had been subjugated by the Urartuan state, resorted to their customary revolt and took over their ancient land and rule. The scattered Urartuan forces were driven to the mountains or were forced to get out of our country and seek refuge in Chaldea. Disposed from their homes and their rule, the Urartuan remnants now began to harry the Hiasian natives who had assumed the government, and whom we may now call Armenians. By mutual concessions, the two elements finally agreed to live side by side peacefully under the supremacy of the Medo-Persians, and the surviving Urartuan nobility and the people were merged with the Armenians.

Thus, we must discredit the legend according to which there was a people called Armenians who, after the collapse of the Urartuans, came from the west, and became the master of our country.* The Armenians, namely the Hiasians, were the owners of our country long before the Khaldis. For a few centuries they were subjugated by the Urartuans, but recovered their country when the Urartuans went to pieces. Approx-

mately the same thing happened a few centuries later when the same Armenians, as a result of the removal of the Seleucid supremacy, laid the foundation of the Artashesian (Arsacid) Dynasty. The same thing happened much later, when as a result of the weakening of the Arab rule, one of the princely dynasties of Armenia—the Bagratids—founded a new kingdom. The same thing happened only recently when the Russians temporarily abandoned the Caucasus. The Armenians were more ancient in our country than the Urartuans and were still there when the Urartuans had disappeared, even as they continue to live in their ancient fatherland today, after the removal of Turkish and Persian rules in the Caucasus during the past century. For the Armenian nation the supremacy of the Urartuans was the same thing as the supremacy of the Parthians. The conqueror is gone, while the scattered and assimilated native continues to live and create in his fatherland.

In the historical era, when the Armenian alphabet was invented, we see that the whole of Armenia, from Tzopk to Siunik, and from Gougark to Gordyene, was populated by Armenians. The remnants of the Cimmerians in the north and the remnants of the Scythians in the north-east had been completely assimilated by the Armenians. So were the more ancient Ashkouzas (Askanazians) in the east and the Togarmans (Torgomians) in the west. The Urartuan had disappeared as a distinct race and language. Assimilated were the Median tribes in the south-east—the Mars. It must be presumed that these were in considerable numbers. In the historic era their habitat was called Marastan and they were highly influential at the court of the Arshakounis (Arsacids). The wild tribes of today who still live a tribal life call themselves Mards, to emphasize the idea of *Mard* which in the Armenian language means man. They are the real men, and in their opinion the rest are not men. In my opinion,

* This view is contradicted by latest scholars of Armenian history. Latest scientific opinion supports the view that the Phrygians and the Armenians, kindred clans who originally had infiltrated from Eastern Europe into Asia Minor, separated, and the Armenians advanced as far as Cappadocia. This advance synchronized with the disappearance of the Urartuan power in Armenia proper and the downfall of the Assyrian Empire. The newcomers reached the Ararat region and settled there during the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. Here they subdued the natives and imposed upon them their language and civilization. In the course of time, the two elements, the Indo-European newcomers, and the natives, were merged into one people which constitute the present day Armenian. See Jacques de Morgan, *History of the Armenian People*, Chapter II.—ED.

these were the Mards whose racial name means Man. And since Mard in our language means man, it must be presumed that the Mards must have been sufficiently numerous to be able to transmit to our language that particular word. I am inclined to believe that the word "Hai" likewise denoted both the nation and the word "man." It is in this sense that the peasant woman of Sourmalu uses the word "Hai" when she accosts her husband, "Ay Hai," meaning, O man," or when she complains to her neighbor saying: "our Hai is late," namely, "our man is late," man referring here to her husband. Perhaps the oldest form of the word "Hai" had the same meaning, which was Hiasa or Hiasha.

We have seen that the oldest layer of the population of our country was Semitic in the central part and the south, and kindreds of Asia Minor in the north. In the course of centuries these two elements were merged into one. It seems to me, however, that they loom up sometimes in our ancient and modern literature, creating a mixed literature and rigidly different forms of style. Eghishe, Grigor of Narek, and Kh. Abovian, with their fiery imagination, torrential language, and fervent feeling, betray an Aryan vein, so close to the fiery temper of the prophets; and Lazar of Pharbe, Nerses the Graceful, and Zohrab are western in their temper, namely Haiasi. Raffi is a harmonious mixture of the two racial bloods.

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Our knowledge of the history of the Hiasas is very deficient. What I have said about their expansion, culture, and revival are mere inferences. We know far more about the Urartuans who were a warlike and reconstructive people as attested by their inscriptions and monumental structures. These basic traits are seen in our Haik, (the legendary father of the Armenians) who faced Belus in battle and who founded the home of Haik and Gordyenes. After having fought

against the Assyrians for several centuries, the Urartuans, now under the name of Nairis (or Nairians), withdrew to our country in order to live freely. Precisely the same thing was done by our Haik who, unable to endure the tyranny of Belus, sought shelter in our mountains. The Assyrian continued to harass the Nairian in his new habitat but to no avail. Likewise, Belus hounded Haik in his new lair but was defeated. In the fastnesses of our country, the Nairian brought forth more saliently the basic trait of his character—audacity which he had long since possessed, having faced imperialistic Assyria for centuries when he was still a Nairian. Having turned to a Urartuan, for a long time he became a challenge to Assyria and dared to acquire a dominant position in our country commensurate with Assyria. We do not know whether or not the Hiasians possessed the same dashing spirit. Their perpetual revolts against the Urartuan rule in the north are indicative of such audacity, and it was the same spirit of insubordination which accounted for their survival, notwithstanding the fact that they were subdued by the Urartuans. And it was the same spirit which drove them to rise against the Urartuan when the later was being disintegrated. It was the same spirit which laid the foundation of the Hiasa state. With the reversal of the tables, it was now the Urartuan's turn to harass the Hiasians for a long time, having relied on his valour and our impregnable mountains. This continued until the two races contrived to live peacefully side by side. These two peoples, which constitute the basic and thickest layers of the Armenian people, were eventually merged into one and transmitted their hardy and daring qualities to the historic Armenian. Having changed its course, the fight now turned to the East—against the Persians, and then to the south, against the Arabs, but the same spirit was always dominant in our mountainland. Later, the nobility which was the militant element,

disappeared, but the nation's spirit of boldness was never extinguished, but continued to smoulder under the ashes. The cultural achievements and constructive will of the two people survived, as well as their militant vigor, whereby the Armenians conquered foreign thrones and were recognized for their warlikeness everywhere, a reputation which they have kept to this day.

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The invention of the Armenian alphabet found the Armenian people living under the rule of the Parthians who by this time were already assimilated by the Armenians and no longer were a power. The real Armenian nation which stemmed from antiquity had two classes: the freeman and the peasant. A third class, the urbanite, consisted mostly of foreigners. The freeman relied on the labor of the peasant, and while for centuries he was subordinate to the native kings (the Artashids), or to foreign rulers (the Persian and the Parthian), he was really the backbone of the country and its fighting force. The freeman recognized the native or foreign king or Satrap, but the peasant recognized none but his kindred prince who lived like him and spoke his language. It was this freeman who, having rallied under the banner of his nobility defended his country and made excursions into foreign territories. It was he who, together with Cyrus, and led by Tigranes, invaded as far as the seashore of Asia Minor and Babylon, and with Tigranes the Great reached as far as Antioch and Palestine. Upon his return, he had brought with him much booty and prisoners, a rich experience in war, a vast fund of information and stories, and once again ensconced in the security of his high stronghold, during the long winter months, at his family hearth, and surrounded by his fellow warriors, he recounted his tales, what he had seen and heard, around the home fire, as he enjoyed the fruits of the peasant. Hunting was his supreme pleasure, holding trials his duty,

and fighting the enemy at the battlefield, his work. To him, the best death was closing his eyes on the battlefield, the greatest glory to come out victorious and his wounds. In his estate, in his province, he was the master, jealous of his tribal and personal rights. The rebuke of the native or foreign king or Satrap had reached his intellect, but never his heart where he always remained a rebel. Only his prince had recognized his court and his subordination, but he himself had grown up a free man in his mountain world and in his towering fortress he had felt himself unshackled by any restraints. He had had national consciousness, had felt the bond with his kindred freeman and peasant, but that consciousness was less strong and less fruitful than his tribal consciousness. Strong-headed and self-reliant, he had often been insubordinate and disobedient both to the native and foreign rulers, by his character and deportment, until the invention of the Armenian alphabet and the founding of Armenian literature. Among his best types, his proud and daring spirit has sometimes been identified with his national consciousness, and frequently, by his behaviour he has become the representative of the Armenian nation. At times, the whole nation has spoken through his lips and the character of the whole nation has shone in his conduct. Thus, the nation and the freeman have merged into one, and one of the classes has become the living image of the whole nation.

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Now let us take a close look at our nobility and the commoner; one of them, before the invention of our alphabet, and the other, at the beginning of the past century. The Persian King Yeztigit sends his son Sapor as king of Armenia, instead of raising a native Arshakouni (Arsacid) to the throne. Witness the attitude of the Armenian nobility toward the crown prince of this mighty power. Khorenatzi relates:

"Once a herd of donkeys were trekking

through some rugged trail when Sapor lagged behind, and Atom of Mok (Mokatzi) railed him saying: 'Keep going, O son of Persian God.' And Sapor said to him: 'Why don't you keep on going? Because only the demons are fit to die among the rocks.' And on another occasion when a hunting party was chasing wild boars through the marshes with the aid of torchlights, in hesitating to drive his horse into the thicket, Sapor was surrounded by the fire, and was looking to his right and left, not knowing where to drive. This time Atom said to him: 'O son of the Persian God, here is your father and God, the fire, why are you afraid?' And Sapor said to him: 'Lay off the joking and ride through the fire so I can follow you. My horse is scared if I lead the way.' Then Atom again railed him, saying: 'Are these rocks too, that I should pave the way for you? And you call the Mokatzi demons; I call you Sassanids women.' And spurring his horse on through the fire as if he were sailing through a garden of flowers, he saved Sapor's life. Thereafter, knowing Sapor would not take the insult easily, he rode off to the land of Mok. At another time, during the course of a game played with staffs, it happened that Shavasp Artzrouni twice took the ball away from Sapor. Giving him a blow with his staff, the King said to him: 'Learn thou to know thyself!' 'Aye, I know myself,' responded Shavasp. 'I know that I am of a royal race and of the blood of Sanassar, and that I and my brothers possess the right to kiss the pillow of the kings if only by virtue of our name!' After Shavasp had said these words, he contemptuously galloped like lightning out of the hippodrome. Again on another occasion, at a gay party, Khosrov Kardman-atzi, who was quite intoxicated, made advances to the nimble-fingered woman who was playing the lyre right in front of Sapor, whereupon the latter indignantly ordered him seized and confined in the court salon. But the latter drew his sword and calmly

walked through the party and went to his home, while none of the bodyguard dared touch him, having tasted his blade in former experiences."

This was the typical native Armenian nobility, the Kardman in the north, the Artzrouni in the central region, and the Mok in the south. This was the way he felt and comported himself under the foreign rule, even when Armenia was divided, the Persian was master and the Arshakouni was impotent. This proud and daring spirit had come down through the ages; it was the spirit of our nation and country. This spirit was rooted in our isolated mountain land where, perched on the heights, the nobility felt itself the masters. Shavasp Artzrouni spoke from Sanassar, or the region of Assyria, when the Persian had not yet set foot in our land. And how haughtily the Armenian princes looked down on Sapor, that foreign crown prince. . . . They had lived a proud and free life, never accustomed to cringing before the palace dignitaries, but always knew the plots which were hatched up in the court, were familiar with the cunning and the deceit of the rulers, and consequently, they drew back into their estates, one in Kardman, the other at Koks, where they felt secure against the intrigues of their rulers. Here was Shavasp Artzrouni who galloped away from his peaceful abode, self-assured and self-reliant like the sun. What a magnificent picture of the proud and free Armenian! Our glorious nobility disappeared, but their proud spirit lingered with the people, because this trait belonged to the nation and was not the monopoly of this or that class. Even in its extreme misery, under the tyranny of the Tartar, the Turk and the Persian, down deep in its heart, the Armenian people always looked down on the foreign ruler and regarded itself the first among "seventy christian" nations. The Armenian often paid a fearful price for this proud attitude, at times he knuckled under, but he was never broken.

This was the picture of the Armenian nobility the latter part of the Fourth Century. But how was the Armenian freeman who was the fighting power of our country, who had always lived a free man, who under the banner of his princes had defended the freedom and the integrity of his country, who sometimes had made conquests, and had faced the might of Rome and Persia, and finally, when the nobility had disappeared as the dominant class, himself had turned into the inglorious peasant? Raffi's Rushtouni, in my opinion, must have been the remnant of this class, now divested of his former glory, whom he saw in the fifties of the past century, right in his own historic province:

Could it be that this Rushtouni is the same ancient Uartuan who, having pierced the centuries, stands now before us, or could he be the ancient Hiasian who created the song of Vahagn and gave him a flaming hair and beard just like his own? Whether the offshoot of one or the other, he is our ancient warrior, the freeman of the Armenian nation now stripped of his ancient glory who has retained his insubordinate spirit. He is the offspring and the guardian of our mountain land, as proud as his onetime nobility. This is the way he looks in the south, on the banks of Lake Van, and no doubt thus he looked in ancient times; the same headgear which is Hittite, the same lance and dagger, probably riding a huge horse, with a twin-edged sword hanging from his side and a shield from his shoulder; never having bent the knee to the foreigner but always solid with his native prince in his own free land.

The same freeman, now stripped of his ancient glory, is also seen in the north, in the land of Tashra, the village of Dsegh. He is the ancestor of our Poet H. Tumanian whom Kh. Abovian saw in the twenties of the Nineteenth Century, and of whom he has left us an excellent description. Abovian's specimen is called Tumanian Hovakim. If we strip Tumanian Hovakim of his rifle and revolver,

and take away from him the religious command "Thou shalt not do evil unto evil," we shall see before us the typical ancient Armenian, living his tribal life and fearless, he clings to his mighty rocks, and has retired into the deep valleys and dark forests in order to avoid the formidable enemy, and driven by his insatiable desire for personal liberty. He does not live very far from those natural caves where his forefathers took shelter in the prehistoric era. Those inaccessible caves are the shelter of his family and property in these perilous days.

In my opinion Raffi's Rushtuni and Abovian's native of Lori are not the scions of our ancient peasantry, but they are the remnants of those ancient freemen who have now been deprived of their ancient glory and who still constitute the fighting force of our land. Themselves and their families used to be free as individuals, but they owed a military duty to their chiefs. Anciently, they were quite a numerous element and constituted a thick layer. They used to constitute the middle stratum between the nobility and the peasant in our social structure. They were land owners and lived by the labor of the peasant.

In all historical eras there is a certain class which has always directed the life of the nation. At the time of the invention of the Armenian alphabet, it was the nobility, headed by the royal house, which governed the nation under Persian supremacy. The freemen who dwelled in the villages were the mainstay of the nobility, the supporters of their power, and hence the sharers in their work and glory. Our historians have said very little about this populous class which wielded the greatest influence and which was the real nation at the time. It was this class which, in the course of time, was deprived of its former halo and, dwelling in the villages, became peasants. In turn, he took the plough and tilled his soil, he too herded his sheep and cattle, but he never disarmed

himself. He became more influential both outside and inside his village and was respected both by the peasants and the rulers of the land. Often he ruled and gave orders, but he always protected his fellow peasant. Through the centuries, and from generation to generation, he retained his ancient fighting spirit practically intact, and although subordinate, and sometimes trodden under foot, he never sustained any basic disfiguration of his character. In his dress, demeanor and poise one can still see the ancient Armenian which Khorenatzi has described so vividly. It was this mighty peasant who, together with the proud nobility, constituted the real Armenian nation of the Fifth Century.

It was this village-dwelling freeman who rubbed elbows with the peasants and placed his stamp on the lower layers of the Armenian nation. The peasant has copied his mode of life and ethical code. The King and the nobility were far superior to the peasant. Our king and our prince could have been proud of the peasants, but it was the village-dwelling freeman who was closer to them. It was the freemen's daughters and sons who served as court maids and servants. The freeman received his honor and punishment from the King and the princes, and he shared their joys as well as their sorrows. The freeman and the peasant were the core of the nation, and it was the culture of their joint influence which has been transmitted to our lower classes of today.

The freeman and the peasant lived away from the center, free from the powerful influence of the King and the upper classes. The freeman's home was full of abundance, brought from the peasants or from his private lands which were cultivated under a special economy. His pantry was full and his heart was always open. His plentiful table was open to guests, foreign or native. His wine was never wanting, and with it the gay conversation and tales of ancient

heroic deeds. On festive days his table was even more abundant and his hand even more generous. He watched from his mansion the peasants' dances and listened to their singing. In those times no doubt they often gathered in ancient shrines now turned to chapels, or went on intertribal pilgrimages now turned to convents. And they made the same ancient sacrifices to the new gods, but invariably always indulged in the same old feasts, the music and the dancings, the same old athletic contests, and the same old loves of pleasures. Paganism was very strong in the Fifth Century, if not altogether dominant among the masses. The word of the new religion scarcely reached the freeman, and as the peasants, they were practically unaffected by the great revolution which had changed the life of the nobility one century before as a result of the new religion.

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This proud and fearless nobility which Khorenatzi has described was the upper stratum of those well-to-do and brave freemen whose remnants were seen by Raffi and Abovian. Both have come down from immemorial antiquity, bringing with them the character and the mode of life of the ancient Armenians practically intact. Rustouni's lance and dagger, Hovakim's sword and horse, have come down from the era of the Hiasas. Flocks and herds were raised by oldest Armenians. The aborigines of our land had large families. They likewise lived in separate companies in this or that hidden part of the mountains, or in deep dark valleys, bravely defending their families and their property against various enemy tribes when they still were unorganized as a state which could coordinate the common interests and restrain their ruinous appetites.

Seldom did the Armenian freeman and the nobility succeed in creating a national state under the supremacy of their kinsmen. The primitive Armenians after the fall of

Urartu, the Artashesians (Arsacids) after the overthrow of the Seleucid dynasty, the Bagratids on the ancestral homeland, and the Rubenians in exile. Anciently the Urartuans, and later the Medo-Persians ruled over our land while our freemen and the nobility continued to live under their supremacy. They preferred to remain a separate tribe and rulers, subordinate to the foreigner, to forming a native state by united national effort. The tribal life and mentality were more deeply rooted and far more strong than the urge of becoming a free nation. Principal obstacles in the path of this urge for unification were: the topography of the land with its lack of roads, transportation and communication facilities with neighboring tribal communities; the self-supporting economy of the tribes which made dependence on a strong distribution center unnecessary; and the surrounding powerful states which utilized the mountainous nature of the land as a strategic base for resisting the enemy or as a safe passage into enemy territory. And if bordering states did not always actually occupy the region, nevertheless their perpetual inroads ruined all tendencies to internal unification.

The uniform administration of the foreign rulers, however, created an identity of conditions which promoted a kindred mentality. As a result of military and administrative obligations to the foreign rulers, the individual Armenian heads of the several services were in constant contact with one another, a circumstance which alone was enough to keep alive their national consciousness. As administrators or commanders of divisions, the Armenian nobility met their kinsmen in the king's or the satrap's court where they were reminded of their kindred nationality and of their subordination to the foreign yoke. In all probability, the same was true of the Hiasa nobility in the Urartuan court. Without the foreigner's rule and his unifying role, the separate Armenian

tribes had no favorable opportunity for arriving at a national-political consciousness. It was the widespread rule of the Urartuans which for the first time engendered the thought of a national government among the Armenians. The Arsacid Dynasty was the direct product of the long Persian rule. The Bagratid Dynasty was born of Arab supremacy, and the Armenia of today is the direct result of Russian supremacy.

Centuries of isolation in their mountainous recesses had made the Armenian uncommunicative. Another factor was the fact that many of the tribes were foreign-born and had been Armenianized later. These were a medley of races which had been unified by the common bonds of language, history, and cultural traditions. These variegated mountain nests lacked sufficiently strong ties to form a unified native state, but they were close enough to one another to prevent complete disintegration. Every tribe had become a strong nation of its own. The Armenian was stronger as a race or a tribe than as a nation, hence he became provincial, rather than national. The family, the tribe, and the race—this was the Armenian form for centuries. The idea of a nation and a fatherland was not known to the Armenians and there was no class which was capable of giving birth to or adopting such a notion at the time of the invention of the alphabet. At that time our country was a subordinate state, a satrapy of the Persian Empire, where an alien although Armenianized royalty was in the process of dying out, was impotent, and no longer enjoyed the respect of the Armenian people. The native prince who traced his origin centuries back was more firmly established in his fortress than the Armenianized Parthian on his throne. However, there was not one prince powerful enough to subjugate the others and to create a national state which would replace the Parthian.

Politically impotent and scattered, the Armenian people nevertheless were united

by a common language and culture. Furthermore, there was the new factor of Christianity which, combined with language and history, cemented together the various independent tribal units. With the nationalization of the Armenian Church this new factor gained added strength. Until then the strongest national factor had been the Armenian legend which enjoyed popularity and esteem, nurtured among the upper classes as a precious memory of a glorious

past and which was repeated by the freeman, the nobility, and the peasant.

The intellectual layer of this nation created the Armenian alphabet and the literature. This nation stemmed from ancient centuries, created a number of cultures, absorbed foreign influences, but always managed to preserve its identity.

THE END

ABOUT AGHBALIAN

Educator, lecturer, scholar, writer, noted authority on Armenian language and literature, and foremost Armenian literary critic, the late Nicol Aghbalian was one of the greatest Armenian intellectuals of the latter half of the Nineteenth and the first quarter of the Twentieth centuries. Educated at the Nersessian Armenian College of Tiflis and Swiss universities, he steadily made a name for himself in Armenian letters and won fame as an educator of exceptional ability. During the Independent Armenian Republic of 1918-1921, he was made Minister of Education serving from 1919 to 1920 and to him goes the distinction of being the founder of the first Armenian University in Alexandropol, the forerunner of the present University of Armenia in Erivan. With the advent of the Soviets, expatriated from the fatherland, he took refuge abroad, and in 1929, together with the distinguished Armenian educator, playwright and novelist Levon Chanth, he was co-founder of the Armenian Jemaran (Junior College) of Beirut which functions to this day under the direction of Levon Chanth. Aghbalian died on August 15, 1947 in Beirut, Lebanon, at the advanced age of 74.

HOW GIVE UP ALL THIS BEAUTY OF THE WORLD*

By LEON Z. SURMELIAN

The nurse in the office of the X-ray specialist handed him an envelope containing the report, his sentence for life or death, he didn't know which. Her enameled face was non-committal.

"Thank you," he said, putting it in his pocket, and left the room. This was something very private and he must read it to himself, and to God. No doubt she knew what was in it, she had typed it herself, but he did not care to ask her.

He crossed slowly to the elevator and pressed the button. While waiting for it to come up he took the envelope out of his pocket but did not dare open it. He could hear the pounding of his heart. He wanted to hope for a little longer. But why persist in his delusions, he asked himself, why be a coward?

His trembling fingers opened the envelope and unfolded the typewritten report. He read:

Roentgen examination of the frontal and maxillary sinuses was negative.

Roentgen examination of the chest:

Thorax is well formed. Costophrenic and cardiographic angles are normal. The heart is normal in size, shape and position. I find no evidence of fluid in the pleural cavity.

Both lungs show unmistakable evidence of tuberculosis, with the closest and most dense lesion in the upper lobe of the right side, where there is a cavity, 3 x 2 centimeters in diameter. The entire right lung from apex to

base is mottled in appearance. This is unquestionably an active tuberculosis in an advanced stage.

Everything went dark before his eyes, as if the world suddenly came to an end and he floated away on the billows of the dissolving universe. What was this—was he dying? It was by no means an unpleasant sensation. He ceased to be a corporeal being and became instead all airy spirit, swimming or flying through an immense whirling void. Then gradually he was able to see again: the walls, the floor under his feet, stopped in their centrifugal movement, regaining their palpable solidity. He found himself leaning against the wall for support. Fortunately he was still on his feet, he had not fallen, and there was nobody in the hall to see him. He was ashamed to admit to himself that he had fainted.

The elevator had come up. As he went down the twelve floors of the First National Bank Building he was overcome by a feeling of utter loneliness and disaster, and the building itself was as cold and cruel as the sharp instruments of the doctors who had their offices there. The quiet corridors echoed with footsteps as in a hospital. He felt entrapped within this architecture of stone and steel, as if in a huge mausoleum of Science and Big Business, built by man to enslave, to destroy, himself.

He hated it as he had never hated any building before. He was fleeing from it as he rushed out into the street. He paused on

* Chapter 1 of my novel, "98.6," to be published this spring by E. P. Dutton & Co.

the pavement, not knowing what to do and where to go. Then turning right he walked along the slippery street. He bent slightly over to his left as he walked, his hand under his thick overcoat clutching at his heart, because of the pain in his left side. He could not hold himself straight. The snowflakes swirled and melted against his face but he did not feel them, and tramped on aimlessly, in a feverish daze.

For a few blocks his mind was blank, he could not think. On recovering his senses he said to himself, so this is the end. A silent cry of anguish welled up in his throat with the blood he spat out. A thousand unspoken words of protest and despair escaped his lips as he wiped them with his blood-stained handkerchief. I can't—I mustn't die, he said to himself, lifting up his head and striking a dramatic pose.

Addressing himself grandly to the benign spirits of his destiny, watching him from above like secret and immemorial stars, I must fight, he said, I must fight and win. And having made this solemn promise and declaration he strode on resolutely—until struck by the pathos of his heroics. He could not tell whether he was sincere or acting.

He smiled, bitterly. He was acting—chasing after impossible dreams—when he was doomed. Science had pronounced its irrevocable verdict on him. The cold cyclopean eye of the X-ray machine had penetrated through his chest and shown the chaos in his bleeding lungs, billions of bacilli boring through them, feeding, multiplying on his tissues by the blind inexorable law of their own nature, tearing open cavities. What they left, the worms would eat.

He glanced enviously at the people in the streets. It was now past five o'clock and they were hurrying home from work. Lights began to shine in store windows. The pavements glistened. The city took on a festive air. To all these crowds going home there was

the promise of rest and fun, dinners enjoyed with good appetites, telephone calls, dates, dances, movies. He was excluded from it all. This nightly carnival of the city was not for him. He was alone on earth, and would depart from it shortly. Why? Why? Why? What had he done to deserve this fate?

Of course, he admitted, he was not the only one who had to die. These healthy, happy people also would die eventually, though none of them apparently realized it. The difference between him and them was only a matter of time. What he regretted was dying so young, before he had really lived. Of all the sad deaths of young men, his somehow struck him as the saddest.

And oddly enough, at this dark hour of his ebbing life, when diseased and wasted, broken in body and spirit, he was wandering alone in the streets of Hamilton spitting blood, preferring the snow and wind to the solitude of his little room, he experienced a sudden overwhelming passion. It seemed like a cruel joke on him that he should think of sex when he was dying. This desire took hold of him to the exclusion of everything else. Nothing else mattered now.

He was too weak, his illness had sapped him of all his strength and physical appetites, but now, when he was condemned to death and determined to fight for his life he felt this tremendous lust rising from deep, deep within him, from the very core of his being—a great carnal hunger beyond anything he had ever experienced in health.

He realized that though a college senior he knew nothing, absolutely nothing about life. Unlike other twenty or twenty-one year old youths he had never been intimate with a woman. People often said about him what a "clean boy" he was. Though of a sensuous temperament he had managed not to fall to the usual temptations. What a fool he had been, what a fool! And now he could not honestly say to himself that he had really lived. He had missed the one experience that

counted most, he thought he could never know about life, he could never solve the riddle without it. Yes, this must be the fruit from the Tree of Knowledge.

He looked at the women in the streets and said to them in his mind: It's in you, but you don't know it. He stared so covetously at a beautiful tall girl in a fur coat that she frowned indignantly, which made her that much more charming. She carried the answer to the mystery within herself, so proudly, without being aware of it.

II

When he reached his house he slipped in quietly through the door, careful not to make any noise and attract the attention of his landlady. He wanted to be alone tonight and dreaded the necessity of speaking to anyone. Going up stealthily to his room he closed the door behind him, switched on the light, and gazed at the stark tragedy of his face in the mirror. He was terrified by the dead glaze of his gray eyes, the life had already gone from them, they burned only with the ghostly reflection of it.

He sat down and leaning over his desk rubbed his aching forehead with clammy fingers. What was he to do? All doors were closed to him. He was like a leper now, people would avoid him, they would be afraid to touch him.

He closed his eyes and pressed his head between his hands. His fevered brain groped through blind alleys of despair: death stared him in the face wherever he turned. He opened the drawer of his desk and took out his diary, a small loose-leaf notebook half filled with his neat handwriting. For weeks he had been writing in it, his diary was like a friend in whom he could confide—his only friend in Hamilton. Almost the first thing he did on coming home at night was to record briefly the state of his health and some of the thoughts that were passing through his mind. His diary knew his secrets, his

hopes, his delusions, his sufferings, and it alone knew them. Poor little diary, he thought, as he looked at it. He had tried to be hard with himself. No self-pity! Yet there was so much self-pity in it he was ashamed, but he could not help it. There was something merciless, awesome and incomprehensible about his illness. He had tried to ignore the terrible reality of it. It pursued him everywhere, day and night, even in his dreams. It had been in his room, in the house, it went up and down the stairs with him, to his classes, wherever he went it was there beside him, reminding him he was not free any more, the course of his life had been altered and he was doomed. He had not been able to forget it or escape it for a moment.

He turned over the pages of his diary, clenching his teeth, and seemed to hear his own pitiful cries in it, the deep silent cries of the heart.

October 15, 1944:

"I've been unwell for the past several days. Don't know what's the matter with me, feel rotten. No pep, no appetite, can't read, can't study, indifferent to everything. My stomach is in bad shape. There's always a bitter taste in my mouth; I've been living practically on ice cream and cokes, can't eat anything.

"After despising people who keep diaries as petty egotists I've started one myself. . . . I've become so morbidly introspective in these last few days. I've changed so much, all of a sudden. I used to be so enthusiastic, happy-go-lucky, never worried about anything, never thought about myself. I can't even smile now. I've got to snap out of this."

October 17:

"I've another cold, dammit. Feel lousy and down in the dumps. Invitation from Newman Club for their first dance. Can't go. Don't feel like going anywhere, doing anything. Didn't go to the Kappa Sig smoker. I don't think I'd care to join a fraternity, though the frat boys certainly have

the pick of the girls here, and women outnumber men 2 to 1. I'll graduate next June anyhow. Would hardly be worth it, just for one semester.

October 20:

"Appetite slightly better, but still coughing hard. Afraid to open my mouth in the classrooms because of the constant irritation in my throat. Can hardly keep my eyes open, especially in the afternoons.

"I made a mistake transferring to the state U. This scientific sociology is the bunk. All these statistics and diagrams and concepts and definitions we've to memorize like parrots mean nothing. The profs here have a maddening talent for uttering platitudes and hiding behind their statistics and "scientific" objectivity. They never commit themselves on any vital issue. Haven't heard a single original or courageous idea expressed by any of them. There's no real sociology without philosophy. The scientific method isn't enough, not by a long shot. Statistics mean nothing, unless rightly interpreted and acted upon. At St. Augustine's I didn't want any theology in my sociology, but I'd rather take the *Rerum Novarum* and the *Quadragesimo Anno*. I've no intention of being another tabulating machine."

October 21:

"Why am I thinking about death all the time? I've the curious feeling I've ceased being myself, I'm no longer Daniel Moore, but somebody else, somebody I don't know, and who frightens me. . . .

"I've been sick before and got well, I'll get well again. Stop this foolishness! Stop groping in the dark! See things as they are, think logically, be your real self again. Keep your shoulders straight and chin up! You are Daniel Moore.

"Trouble is I'm not taking enough exercise. Must go to the gym every day for a stiff workout. And practice deep breathing. One never appreciates one's health until one loses it."

October 22:

"Started going to the gym. Might as well profit from the student activity fee I paid. Worked on the parallel bars, punched bags and ran a quarter mile on the indoor track. Then took a hot shower, followed by cold water. Like in the old days. . . . Left the gym punch drunk. As I write these lines my head feels like twice its normal size. Maybe I overdid it."

October 26:

"Skipped my classes today. Can't get rid of this cold. Seeing me brooding on the sofa Mrs. Shannon said, 'Dan, you're in love. You're love sick, that's what's the matter with you. Who's the lucky gal?' I just smiled. Let her think so. She told me I ought to smile more. 'It's very becoming to you. Don't sit and brood there all the time.' She's a good soul. I'm lucky to have a landlady like her. But does she like to gossip on the phone! And the mascara on her eyelashes, and the confession magazines she reads. . . . She'd be a beautiful woman without the excess baggage on her. She prepared a good lunch for me but I couldn't eat it. Then she went to a movie. Without her radio on and her incessant chatter on the phone the house was very quiet.

"Lately I've been having chills. Last night I couldn't keep warm, piled all my clothes on my bed and was still shivering. Then I woke up in a terrific sweat. The sheet under me was so wet I had to pull it out. These severe chills followed by profuse sweating make me think that maybe I've malaria. I remember I had an attack of malaria when I was a kid and was visiting grandpa on his farm in Missouri."

He paused and looked up from his diary, shaking his head. He had tried to convince himself and the doctors he had malaria, and both Dr. Martha Stevens of the university dispensary and Dr. Parker, professor of medical parasitology, thought he had all the

symptoms. Dr. Parker took him to his class in medical parasitology and had his students examine his blood, but they couldn't find the parasites they were looking for. He could see Dr. Parker's drawings on the blackboard showing the life cycle of *Plasmodium vivax*; the experiments in the little laboratory of his office which was like his private chapel, his secret altar of worship. Using different staining methods, and consulting thick volumes in various languages, Dr. Parker tried to find the parasites he was so anxious to have. He himself took a look at a prepared slide, which revealed to him the intricate beauty of the blood. The picture under the microscope was entrancing. A whole internal universe, vast astral systems. Purple clusters and fragments of burning stars in clouds of egg-shell blue or pink, luminous revolving discs and rings arrested in their grand cosmic motions and shadowy outlines of innumerable planetary worlds.

Daniel's eyes returned to the diary. He turned over the pages describing this malaria episode. He had tried to fool himself and the doctors. He continued reading.

November 5, 7:30 a. m.

"I got up this morning with a sharp stabbing pain in my heart, and while clearing my throat in the bathroom spat out in the toilet gobs of black blood. I mustn't give up hope. I must be patient, patient like Job.

6 p. m.

"Dr. Stevens examined my heart and said it's okay. She said the pain in my left side isn't in my heart; it's a neuralgic pain. She gave me an ointment for it. I told her about the black coagulated blood I spat out this morning. I thought it might have come from my heart, she said no, it couldn't, there's nothing wrong with my heart. 'Maybe it came from my lungs,' I said. It was so hard for me to say that word 'lungs,' 'Maybe I've TB. My father died of TB when I was seven.' 'Don't be a hypochondriac,' she said. 'TB isn't hereditary. Because your father

died of it it doesn't mean you have it too.' She thinks I've an infection in my sinuses.

"How curious and dramatic is my present life! This morning I was like a dying man. Now new hope, new life. I must stop tormenting myself with imaginary illnesses. I already feel much better. I had a fairly good dinner. Sinus trouble can make one miserable but it's nothing to worry about."

November 10:

"Stopped going to the gym. I've grown so thin I'm ashamed to go to my classes. I don't talk to anybody on the campus. My personality has changed so much I'm like a stranger to myself. I've never had this experience before. None of my friends at St. Augustine's would recognize me. Haven't been to a football game this year. No extra-curricular activities of any kind. I don't want to expose my misery to others.

"The ointment Dr. Stevens gave me helped for a while, but the pain returned. I had two awful nights. Couldn't lie down in bed or sit up. Couldn't move, couldn't breathe. I was paralyzed and helpless by the pain. I don't think this is neuralgia. It must be pleurisy. I don't know how I dragged myself to my classes. A man just can't be sicker than I am. But I am trying to hide it from others, pretending to be well, just suffering from a cold and sinus trouble."

November 18:

"It's the blood I'm spitting that's killing me mentally. I'm afraid I *have* TB. How terrible is this thought. My hand is trembling."

November 21:

"If I ever recover my health I'll be the kindest, humblest, most useful and selfless man in the world. I was thinking today, how humble was Christ. *Above all I must be humble.* I prayed today. The saint is the greatest hero. Perhaps there is no God, but all my life I've wanted to be like Christ."

November 25:

"I seem to be improving again. I think

I'm definitely on the upgrade now. The sun was shining and I went for a short walk. Am continuing my deep breathing exercises."

December 1:

"Had a bad day. This morning I didn't feel like getting up, I thought I just couldn't. But I got up because I've missed too many classes already. I think I'll flunk all my subjects. I don't care. Can't concentrate.

"I can't go on like this, I'm positive I've TB. She suggested I have an X-ray of my chest and sinuses and gave me a note to an X-ray specialist downtown. *Tomorrow I'll know the truth.*

"I'm so depressed, and I've lost all hope. This afternoon as I looked up at the sky I thought it was gray like the gray of tombstones. How I hate this town! The streets, the buildings, the ugly old churches with their spires and all these modern banks and garages have such a dark sinister look about them. There are more funeral billboards in Hamilton than in any other city of the U. S. Morticians rule this town.

"Tonight it's very cold and windy outside. My window is rattling. I seem to see a blind raven blacker than Poe's beating its weary wings against it. I feel like a man alone in the universe. It's worse than any physical illness or pain. I think I know how Christ felt when he cried out from the cross, 'O Father why hast thou forsaken me?'"

This was the last entry in his diary. He did not care to write anything more in it. He closed it and put it back in the drawer. His story was finished. The game was up. The X-ray confirmed his fears.

III

He got up and looked around his room—at his books—at his clock on the mantelpiece—at the gaudy print of red poppies he had bought in a 5 & 10c store, which gave him a warm feeling of summer and the fields—at his neatly made bed—at the university pennant on the wall—as if he had never seen them before, as indeed he had not.

He looked out the window to see the world for the first and last time. The ground and roofs were white with the year's first snow, shining with the mellow jewelled glow of the city's lights. The snow had stopped, and the stars sparkled bright and clean in the deep liquid purple of the clearing sky.

He observed the trees and bushes in the garden, their branches white with the perfect bloom of snow—each tree and bush like a magnified snow crystal. He could see every individual crystal of the snow with which the world had flowered, and he could not bear to give up a single sprig of these miraculous snow-flowers.

He thought: I would never see snow crystals, trees, clouds, the moon and the stars again. Goodbye, goodbye forever! He wanted to stand by his window all night. At this hour of his final farewell to the world, when he was dying alone in his room, he felt as if he had been dreaming all his life, but was now awake and saw the world as it was in reality—and the world was so incredibly beautiful that tears trickled down his cheeks. He needed a thousand tongues to voice his protest against the fate meted out to him, the eternal cruelty of life's preconceived design, all this enchantment, and death.

Pulling down the shade, he began to undress. He was barely able to move his left arm, and took care not to look at the cadaverous nakedness of his body as he put on his pajamas. It was no use going to bed, he would not be able to sleep because of the pain in his chest, but he was exhausted from his long walk. As he got into bed he suppressed another paroxysm of cough, for fear the Shannons downstairs would hear him. He could not lie down, but sat up half way, leaning against the pillows, as he had night after night.

He breathed in small spasmodic gasps. He felt it coming again, his dreadful cough, rising inside him with the pressure of an erupting volcano. He wanted to push it

down, stopped breathing altogether. He coughed, coughed, trying to muffle the sound of it by holding a handkerchief against his mouth. It seared, tore his lungs and heart, and left him breathless and exhausted. On previous nights he had taken a cough syrup, advertised in the papers, a bottle of which he kept hidden in a drawer. Now he knew it would do him no good. It wasn't just a "cold" that he had. This constant tickling in his throat was caused by the fingers of death.

Was this aching, wasted body he loathed and was ashamed of, *his*? How could he be this wretched person in bed, afraid to move, afraid to breathe, when outside the trees were filigreed with the graceful swirls of pure heaven-stuff and the world shone with the white crystal lights of snow?

And now that he was face to face with death he was confronted, as never before, with the fundamental question of man's destiny, not as an abstract religious or philosophic precept, but as a personal and fearfully immediate problem. He recalled the retreats at St. Augustine's College which he had attended for three years. He had tried to think deeply about God, the creation of the world, the laws of revealed truth, the mortal and immortal life of man. These questions, though disturbing enough, had meant little to him then. He had gone through the established routine of these retreats pretending a piety he did not feel and to understand mysteries that were beyond his comprehension. Now he wanted desperately to believe in the reality of the immaterial world, in the immortality of the soul, in the supernatural destiny of man—in all the beautiful metaphysics of the Christology of Chalcedon.

What would he be after death? He wondered if dying would be something like fainting, the novel experience he had had that afternoon, and his soul would float or swim away through the whirling void of the universe until dissolved in it. Or would death be the beginning of more, everlasting suffering for him in the fires of hell? His mind struggled with the enigma of man's fate, both in this world and the next—if there was a next world. Exile on earth, was man to be condemned also to the eternal exile of the skies?

One thing is certain, he thought. He would rot under the earth. And he could feel the earth falling on him, he could hear the dull thuds of the shovelfuls of earth piling up on him, the dampness, the smell, the weight, the cold wormy horror of the grave.

He listened to the alarm clock on the dresser clicking away the cruel time and he thought: It will tick-tock like this after I'm gone. Time never stops, time never cares, time is the hand of death. It gathers them all in like fallen leaves and sweeps them off the earth. If only the clock could understand, if only the clock could understand!

The clock was counting his last hours on earth as the metronome of death. He thought: men march to the drumbeats of time's everlasting dirge, some gay, others sad, some laughing, others crying, some seeing, others blind, but they all move on together in the lock-step of the clock, marionettes whose strings are pulled by the dark hand of death, the mighty clown.

He looked out of the window again. O God, God, God! To give all this beauty of the world to man and then take it away from him!



I COMMITTED AN ERROR

By H. SANINIAN

The author of this story, H. Saninian, is a D. P. He relates what actually happened to him and what he saw with his own eyes. His story, like countless others which have been written before him, is an additional authentic testimony of the grim rule which prevails in the Soviet Union.

The day of my graduation was one of the happiest days of my life because I thought it would mark the end of my endless privations. I was a certified agricultural specialist now and I pictured before me a brilliant future, with the sort of work I loved and a more or less secure life.

"I will go to my home town," I mused, "they will give a home and a tolerable weekly pay check. I will give the peasants the benefit of my expert knowledge, classify their labors, and direct their economy with scientific advice. They are impatiently waiting for the likes of me."

But it soon became clear that all this was but an illusion. As a matter of fact an entirely different thing was in store for me. In the evening, about four o'clock, I knocked at the door of the regional agricultural director to whose region I had been assigned.

"Who is there? Come in," spoke a throaty, impatient voice.

I opened the door softly and entered in. At the opposite wall, behind a huge desk near the windows, there stood a middle-aged man, dressed in a semimilitary uniform with a revolver in his belt who, without paying any attention to me, was busily collecting the papers on the table and tucking them in the drawer.

I was horrified thinking I had stepped into the office of the Cheka by a mistake. My

first impulse was to run away from the place but when I saw the pictures of animals and agricultural implements on the walls I was sure that I had come to the right place.

"How do you do," I said in a rather intimate voice to my future chief.

The man raised his head, scanned me from head to foot with an irritated, malevolent look, and without returning my greeting, asked coarsely, "What do you want?"

"Comrade Director, I am agronomist Vardanian. You must already have had a wire about me," I said smiling, displaying the while my papers.

After introducing myself, as his future assistant, I thought he would receive me with some degree of warmth, but he did not even pay any attention to the papers which I held out to him, and continuing to collect his papers, he mumbled under his nose, "It is too late now. It's time to leave. Come tomorrow."

I was astounded at his attitude.

"Comrade Director, I don't know a soul here. Where shall I spend the night?"

Without saying a word, he stepped out from behind his desk, and stopping at the door, he shouted in a powerful voice, "Ivan, Ivan."

For a long time no one showed up. One eye fixed on me, and the other glued to the end of the long corridor, he again bellowed

impatiently, "Ivan, Ivan, you son of a . . ."

Presently Ivan showed up, a giant of a man with bloodshot eyes. It seemed he was a drunkard.

"Take this citizen to his bunk," ordered the Director, and turning to me, he said in an indifferent voice, "Go with Ivan. Come to see me tomorrow."

I whisked my bundle from the top of the table and followed Ivan. He took me out into the courtyard, then led me to an underground ramshackle building. The door of the room where I was to spend the night was open. Inside were a few rickety iron beds, covered with dull-colored military blankets.

"They are all taken except that one," Ivan said, pointing to the bed near the door. I walked over to the bed, put my bundle on it, and took out a cigarette ready to light it.

"Smoking is forbidden in this room," Ivan observed sullenly.

My blood rushed to my head. "Why?" I asked irritated.

"You look like a learned man, can't you figure out that much that the building may catch fire?" he asked biting.

"They smoke in all the buildings but they don't catch fire. Why should this building be an exception?"

"All the buildings may catch fire or not, that is their affair, but I have forbidden smoking in this room. I am the boss here. The building is the property of the Socialist State, I must take good care of it," he added in a conciliatory tone, and walked out.

I put the cigarette in my pocket and sat down on the bed, surveying my surroundings. The room was deserted. Its entire fixtures consisted of four pitiful beds and an abominable table in the center whose surface was smeared with dirt and grease, giving it an inexpressibly dull color. On one side of the table was a stool, as if a survival of the deluge. The color of the walls in no wise differed from the color of the floor which

was covered with a thick layer of dirt and with the rind and seeds of melon.

* * *

I was stunned by my reception. My heart was filled with extreme pain and resentment as I recalled our graduation night. And what a night that was! I had never heard so many speeches in my life as I heard that night. Practically every one spoke that night, beginning with the president of the faculty to the professors, the head of the secret intelligence, and the Komsomol valedictorian.

"You are lucky that you shall work in our socialistic fields. Go put our agriculture, which already is the first of its class in all the world, on a solid scientific foundation. The glory of the Soviet laborer awaits you there, since you are the laborers of a government which knows how to appreciate labor," said our president.

We responded to him with our youthful frantic applause.

"The Soviet government is entrusting you with the career of the most responsible of all labors. You must be proud to be the repositories of that trust. In the villages you will be the object of universal adulation and tenderness. You must justify that tenderness which of all Soviet intellectuals it has been your good fortune to merit. Down with the bourgeoisie world where the intellectuals are famishing from unemployment, where they are servants in the homes of the capitalists." Thus spoke Comrade Nakanov, the director of the secret service.

I would perhaps have kept on recalling the remainder of the wonderful speeches if Comrade Nakanov's reference to the famished intellectuals abroad had not reminded me of my own famished condition. I was really starving. I had come out of Moscow without a kopek in my pocket because my entire monthly wages had been spent on getting ready for our graduation evening and for entertaining our speakers of the night. I had left with nothing but my transportation

ticket in the firm belief that I would get all I needed the minute I arrived at my assigned destination. But the cold reception I got from my regional director made me forget asking him for some funds to meet my immediate needs.

What to do, under the circumstances? I decided to step into the street and try my luck. I might meet some Armenian. "Are not Armenians to be found everywhere?" I said to myself, and hiding my bundle under the pillow, I stepped out. It was getting dark outside and an autumnal light drizzle was drenching the rooftops. The streets were deserted. There was no light in the windows, as if no one lived inside.

I hurried back to my room. It was plain now that I would spend the night without any food. From a distance I noticed a dim light in my room. My room mates had already retired for the night. I greeted them and sat down on my bed.

"Where do you come from, Khoziain (Sir)?" asked derisively one of them who was lying in his bed. The outcasts of the Soviet Union addressed one another by the derisive appellation of Khazia (Sir).

"What does it matter?" I replied impatiently, exasperated from my hunger.

"It seems he is not one of the Khoziain's" observed a second inmate.

"I guess I was wrong," corrected himself the first man sarcastically. "I see his clothes are tailor made and he is going to spend the night at Moscow Hotel."

At this I chuckled heartily in which I was joined by the other three. Encouraged by my laughter, the first man pressed his question: "Really? What is your office, Comrade? It's the first time I've seen you in these parts."

"I am an agricultural specialist, an agronomist," I replied.

"Ah, an agronomist!" exclaimed all three in unison. "Then we are colleagues."

"Didn't I tell you that he was one of the

Khoziain's?" commented the first triumphantly.

Having broken the ice, we now started the conversation which lasted until midnight. When I told them of the cold reception I had had at the regional office they looked at each other and smiled mysteriously.

"It couldn't have been otherwise," observed one of them.

"Why?" I asked.

Again they laughed.

"Because you have no party card," replied the first whom his comrades called Vanya.

"But how did you know?"

"Your papers, your biography, and the entire dope was here long before you arrived."

I was too young yet to understand the inner workings of the Soviet regime. "What is in store for me in the village?" I asked.

"You will see when you get there," they replied in unison.

And I understood them.

I realised with a shudder that our conversation had gone too far. "What if one of them, or two, or all three were spies?" I asked myself. But fortunately my suspicions were groundless. Later it came to light that all three were clean cut youths.

2

When in the morning I woke up I saw that none of my colleagues was in the room. Finding no water to wash up with, I dressed the best I could, picked up my bundle and ran to the office of the regional director. But my haste proved superfluous because the director was not in yet. A young girl seated before the typewriter was busy touching up her lips, after wetting them with her tongue. I was forced to wait there until the arrival of my director. Finally he came. That morning he looked even more sullen. His eyes were swollen from hangover. He saw me from a distance but without paying any attention to me he entered his office. I followed him.

Seeing him, the girl smiled guiltily and tried to appear nonchalant. "Dobroye outro, Tavarish Yegorov,"—"Good morning, Comrade Yegorov," she greeted him.

"I am angry at you," said the director, ignoring her greeting, as he headed for his desk, but as if regretting his rudeness, he approached her and continued, "Why did you leave so soon last night?"

"I couldn't help it, Comrade Yegorov, I couldn't," the girl apologized.

"I know why you couldn't, because . . ." and Yegorov dropped his hands in despair.

"Because of what?"

"You know what. What more can I say?"

"It's a lie, it's a dirty lie. I know who started the gossip," the girl replied in an injured tone.

Comrade Yegorov's face cleared.

"Very well, how about tonight? There won't be a crowd. Just you and me, Comrade Urayov and Valya.

The girl demurred giving an answer. The director was watching her with a cunning smile.

"You won't be sorry. The table will be loaded, besides I just saw the director of the cooperative who has received some fresh goods. I ordered a special present for you."

The girl's eyes began to sparkle.

"What is it? Please tell me."

"You will know when you come."

"No, I will not come until you tell me what it is."

"You won't see it if you don't come."

The girl came close and threw her arm around his neck. "Come now, Comrade Yegorov, please tell me," she coaxed him.

It seemed I was standing on a volcano. They were paying no attention to me. "Comrade Director," I interrupted them, "Will you please give me a minute of your time?"

They both looked at me irritated. "What is it you want?" the girl shouted at me angrily.

Without replying to her, I approached the director's desk and displayed my papers. He pushed them aside without reading, then, opening his drawer he drew out some papers and turned to the girl:

"Has the chief agronomist arrived yet?"

"No."

He looked at his papers, scratched his forehead, then scribbling something on them he handed them to the girl. "Make out a directive on this," he ordered. The girl reluctantly picked up the paper, and fixing me with a venomous look, she practically commanded: "Wait in the corridor." I pretended not to hear her.

"Comrade Director, could you make me a little advance?" I asked him.

"Where from?"

"I don't know where, but I haven't a kopek to my name."

"I am sorry but I can't help you."

"How come you can't help me? They told me from the center that you should help me."

Yegorov was exasperated. "The center, the center," he exclaimed impatiently. "That center would have done well to have supplied you with money." Then, as if regretting his rashness, he relented. "In the Kolkhoz you don't need any money" he said.

"How on earth can I live without money?"

"You will get your working days' pay."

"When? I am starved right now."

The girl finished her typing and handed the paper to the director for his signature. Yegorov scribbled his signature. "From this moment on," he frothed, "the Kolkhoz is obliged to feed you. Pick it up. The village where you will work is not far from here. Twenty kilometers in all. If you hurry you will be in time for dinner."

I picked up the papers.

"Then there is no money?"

"There is no money."

"How can I go to the village without money?"

"Comrade Yegorov, order a plane for the citizen," the girl jibed in sarcastically.

I could no longer stand it. That girl was persecuting me because I had stopped her from knowing what her present was.

"If the conversation does not concern you, please don't butt in," I rebuked her tartly. She blushed, and turned her gaze to her lover as if asking him to defend her. The Director rose to his feet. "That will be all for now, Comrade Vardanian," he said curtly. "Now go to your work."

I muttered an indistinct good by and headed for the door. As I was ready to step out the Director called me back: "Comrade Vardanian." I looked behind me and saw that the girl again had her arm around his neck.

"Comrade Vardanian," he emphasized each word, "get this. You are forbidden to come to the regional headquarters without my special permission."

Without saying a word I stepped out into the aisle. My heart was verily bursting from indignation. Where was I to go? I looked at my papers and noted the paragraph: "To the President of the Soviet of Kroushke Village: Agronomist Vardanian is assigned to work at the Kolkhoz of 'We are building socialism.' He will be paid for his work days by the kolkhoz. Signed—Regional Director Yegorov."

They showed me the way to the village, a distance of several hours on foot. It was a sunny day. The path trailed through harvested fields which, regardless of their barrenness, still looked beautiful in view of the labor which had been put into them. Everywhere I looked I saw vast stretches of those golden fields. I was looking at them with eyes of the peasant and my soul was filled with joy at the prospect of their rich fertility. Sometimes, unable to resist longer, I would step out of the trail, would scoop up the wet soil and sifting it through my fingers I would whisper joyfully, "Black soil!" That soil

was rich as gold, and, as it seemed, it was plentiful, since there was nothing but fields as far as my eyes could see.

"The peasants of this region must be rich," I said to myself.

I kept on walking intoxicated with the sight of the fields, with the smell of the wet stalks drying in the sun, from the proximity of the work I loved, and from the pleasure of the future outlook. I had forgotten by now the insult of the director's office and even my hunger.

3

The autumnal day was setting as I arrived in the village. At once I went to the office of the Village Council. It was a dirty ramshackle building, obviously the home of some former Koulak peasant. The inside was jammed with peasants, some lined up against the walls, and others seated on a lone crowded bench, or on the dirty ground floor. There were women from whose tattered and dirty skirts hung half naked babies with disheveled hair and repulsively dirty faces. Their noses were dirty with the congealed snout reaching down to their lips.

I was profoundly impressed with these pitiful babies with their pale faces, with their bloated bellies and bow legs, all of whom were naked and without shoes. It looked like they all had been picked up from a dung chest. Their mothers were clothed in rags, with cracked feet, with widely separated or twisted toes. Their faces were irritated, their looks full of malignant hatred. Their chests were flat, their hair disheveled and dirty. There was not a trace of the attraction of the fair sex on those miserable women who had been born under the evil star.

The men folk were no better off than the women and children. For months they had neither washed nor shaved, with clothes scarcely enough to cover their nakedness. They were not barefooted but their footwear was hardly tolerable. To protect their feet

from the cold and the moisture they used pieces of burlap fastened with thick twine. Many wore military boots left from the first world war, with nothing left except the name and the general appearance. Riddled with holes, without heels or soles, no one knew what purpose these dilapidated and twisted shoes could serve. The same was true of their pants and their sheep skin wraps left from the feudal era of a hundred years ago.

In the office, the air was impregnated with the smell of heavy Makhorka* smoke, of unwashed bodies and dirty rags. When I entered the room was almost silent except a young woman who, holding a little baby in her hands, was standing in front of the president's desk and crying. To the right and left of the president were seated two persons one of whom, as I later learned, was the party secretary, and the other was the president of the Kolkhoz called "We are building socialism." All three were hefty youths with red cheeks, with newly-cut short red jackets, woolen trousers, and tight and warm long military boots.

As no one paid any attention to me, I stood there at the door.

"Go, Marousya, go, we can do nothing for you," said the president of the Village Council without looking at the woman.

"You must help me," the woman was sobbing, "how else can it be? I tell you the old woman is already dying of hunger. I do not want to see my child die too." And she pressed an emaciated baby wrapped in rags tightly to her breast.

The president of the Village Council turned to the director of the Kolkhoz and whispered something in his ear.

"I can't. How can I?" the other protested in despair. "You know that is impossible, not even one gram." And he looked pleadingly at the party secretary.

The latter stood up and pounded at the table nervously:

"I am surprised," he roared looking at the crying woman, "that you, Marousya, a young woman, healthy and strong, have come here to ask for alms. Shame on you, for shame!"

The woman would not let him go on. Flushed with anger, she cried:

"Shame on you, you. Am I the one who is asking for alms? Me?"

Frightened by her screams, the baby began to cry.

"Be still, Vasya," she scolded the baby, then stepping closer, she rapped on the table. "I have 200 work days' pay coming to me," she screamed. "Pay me, pay me now, and keep your alms to yourself, you village bull."

The crowd began to cough and to stir. There were repressed chuckles. Flushed with anger, the party secretary jumped from his seat and made for the woman, but the president of the Kolkhoz stopped him.

"It's a shame, Valodya," he reprimanded him. "Why do you pay any attention to this raving woman?" He pushed the woman aside, saying, "Go now, go on. You are talking foolishly."

With a triumphal air, the woman started toward the door, but before leaving she stopped, looked back, and shouted at the big shots: "Just wait. I know to whom I shall write." And she stepped out.

The big shots began to laugh scornfully, but the party secretary hissed through his teeth: "You whore!"

"Kamarov!" the president of the Village Council suddenly called: "Is Kamarov here?"

An old man from among the peasants who were lined up near the wall started to move toward the desk with an indifferent air.

"What is it you want?" he asked.

"Kamarov," the president spoke reproachfully, "why are you indolent? Why don't you go to work?"

The old man did not answer him, but turning to the spectators, he asked them with a

* Worst kind of tobacco.

cynical smile: "What does he say?"

One of the spectators shouted with the same cynical smile, "He says you are lazy, you don't want to work."

The president was furious. "What in hell are you here? Are you the defence attorney?" he shouted at the speaker.

"I wanted to become a lawyer, Comrade president, but my education was half finished and I became a Kolkhoznik," retaliated the man.

The illiterate peasant's witticism at the expense of the Kolkhoz provoked general laughter except from the village leaders who were furious. "If you keep on interrupting us I will be forced to order you out," the President threatened. Again general laughter.

Turning to the first peasant the president warned; "Kamarov," he said, "tomorrow you will go to work."

"Comrade president, how can a lazy man work?" the old man replied simulating seriousness.

"I did not say you are lazy. I said you are practicing laziness," the president replied placatingly.

"I cannot, Comrade President."

"Why can't you?"

"To be able to work one must eat."

"No man who is starved is being forced to work."

"You are forcing me."

The conversation became earnest now. The party secretary whispered something in the president's ear.

"Kamarov, go back to your place," the president ordered, then turning to the crowd he chided them. "Comrades," he said, "what sort of nonsense is going on here? I am surprised at the way you are carrying on. What sort of talk is this? I tell you this is bad talk, it is bad for all of us. Kamarov says he is starved. He is lying. Even if he is not lying, he is to blame for being starved. One must work in order not to starve. In our country,

he who does not work does not eat. Take Comrade Smirnov, the president of our kolkhoz who is with us just now. He complains that the affairs of the kolkhoz have been neglected, that the plans have not been carried out, and that no one wants to go to work. This is scandalous. Here we are, all of you former red partisans, participants of the civil fights, and the most loyal elements of the soviet government. You must set the examples for others to follow. Now go home all of you. Kamarov and Karp Karpich will stay. I want to talk to them."

After the crowd had dispersed I presented myself to the village chiefs. The president glanced over my papers then handed them to the director of the Kolkhoz Smirnov. The latter read the papers, looked at me, again read them, then turned to me indifferently: "I will send you to the fields tomorrow," he said.

"Where shall I start?"

"Just now we are harvesting the corn. Soon we shall start the fall planting."

"Please do something about the matter of living quarters."

"What living quarters?"

"For myself."

"You don't need any room. You must spend the night in the field."

I wanted to explain the matter more in detail but just then Smirnov got involved in another conversation. I left the place and when I returned I saw that all had left except the president of the village council, party secretary Smirnov, the office secretary, Kamarov, Karpich, and two komsomolists. Again the speaker was Smirnov. His voice was dry, threatening, and chekistlike.

"I am surprised," he was saying, "I am surprised that you two red partisans are sabotaging the very government for the establishment of which you fought." In pronouncing the last words his voice softened.

Karpich wanted to reply but Kamarov

yanked him aside. "Wait, Karpich," he said, "the floor is mine." Then turning to the secretary he said, "You are quite right. It's true we fought for that government, we shed blood for it. But all that was an error."

"How come?"

"You know it very well. We fought for freedom and instead we got slavery."

"I forbid you to utter such words in this office," the president of the village council shouted furiously.

Kamarov rose to his feet. "You started this conversation," he shouted back turning to his neighbor he said, "Let's go, Karpich." And the two left the room.

This was my second opportunity to approach Smirnov. "Comrade Smirnov," I pleaded, "please give me a room for tonight."

Smirnov walked over to the window and rapped at the glass, signaling to a passer by to come in. It was a young peasant. "Petya," he said to the newcomer, "the comrade agronomist will spend the night at your house."

The youth was confused, he wanted to say something but suddenly he assented. I accompanied my host to his house. It was already dark when we entered the shack. Inside, under the dim light of a lamp a young woman was spanking a two year old child. The boy was squealing like a little pig trapped by the feet. I was broken-hearted at the sight.

"What happened now?" the husband asked timorously.

The woman dropped the baby, turned around, and seeing her husband, screamed: "Let him die, let all die. Let this whole world go to perdition!" She sat down and began to cry piteously, wiping her eyes with the dirty hem of her skirt. "My God, my God, what a life!" she sobbed convulsively.

I who had hated this woman when I saw her spanking her child so brutally relented now. Hers was the cry of a tormented, oppressed, and famished wretch. I looked

around me and was frightened. It was the first time in my life I was seeing such poverty and misery. The shack was practically empty. In one corner, occupying a considerably large space, loomed a Russian combination oven stove. The walls were blotched with swarms of night insects, now separating, now merging into hills, causing a nauseating swishing sound. Opposite the stove, near the window, beside a long bench was a bare table on which flickered a dim lamp. In another corner was a big chest, while on the opposite side, on the ground, were a few sheafs of stalk, covered with an old wornout carpet. A few pieces of dirty linen hung from a clothes line which stretched from the stove to the corner of the stalks.

My host invited me to sit on the bench and turning to his wife he said, "Manya, stop your crying. We have a visitor."

The woman looked all around and for the first time saw me. "You will forgive me," she apologized, and wiping her eyes she rose to her feet.

"You must be hungry," the young man said somewhat bashfully.

I could not give him a definite answer, but what I could manage to say was both yes and no.

"What have we got, Manya? Fetch what you have."

The baby stopped crying when he heard his father order the food and clambering on the bench sat down near the table. The landlady signalled to her husband to come near and whispered something in his ear. The husband shook his shoulders and sat down. "Fetch what you've got. It is not our fault," he said, then turning to me he said, "You will forgive us, Comrade agronomist, that we have no bread in the house, that we cannot entertain you as we should."

Again I was embarrassed. "What you've got is good enough for me," I said.

The young woman pulled out of the oven a black pot, emptied the contents into a plat-

ter, and set it on the table. It was a steaming beet stew.

"Oh, beets are wonderfully nourishing, I like it very much," I said, breaking the oppressive silence.

"I'd rather have the delicious borsch of my own cooking together with a piece of rye bread. We haven't seen it for a long time," the woman observed.

"We must thank God that we have even this much. I see dark days ahead of us," the young husband commented, and seeing the baby pull the whole plate before him, he called him down. "Let Uncle too have some of it," he said to the child. But I could not eat any longer. I could not swallow the one or two morsels I had taken because all the time I was thinking that I was robbing the starved out of their share.

"Let the kid eat it," I begged, "I am already full. Thanks."

The young wife got up, then sat down again, and started to cry.

"What a life! My God, what a life!"

Her husband came near her and began to caress her shoulders. "Enough, Manya, enough," he said comfortingly. "We are not the only ones." Then turning to me he said, "Comrade agronomist, what will be our end? The people are melting away."

He had an ache in his soul which he wanted me to share. He wanted to hear a comforting word. Only then did I see the appalling misery of the Soviet village and I was stunned. I saw that there was not even a trickle of the happiness which I used to hear from the Soviet newspapers, the radio, and the lectures. On the contrary, conditions were so shocking that I could hardly believe my eyes. I wanted to know the real causes but I restrained myself for very understandable reasons. That is why my answer was vague:

"Oh nothing. Everything will be all right, I think, everything will be all right."

"When?" The young woman shot back with a scornful look, and turning to the baby she said, "Come, let's go to bed."

The young mother and the child retired on top of the fireplace, while the young husband and I bunked on the sheafs. The young man put out the light. "There is no kerosene," he said, "we can scarcely buy two kilos for the whole year."

"Why?" I asked. "Is there no money, or kerosene?"

"Both one and the other. I haven't seen the face of a kopek for a whole year. We have two chickens. With the eggs my wife gets sometimes some salt, sometimes some matches and kerosene. We deprive our child of his food so we can make the exchange. Besides, you cannot exchange eggs for money at the cooperative."

Lying there together on the sheaves and covered by the same carpet, we two felt a sort of intimacy, a sort of loyalty toward each other. From the very first moment I met him, I felt that this peasant youth was not a bad egg.

"Peoter, please explain to me, what is going on in this village? What I heard and saw today has stunned me. Is this the real picture of a soviet village?"

"And more, Comrade agronomist, and far more."

"Why is it so bad?"

"It has always been bad but this year it is the limit. The crops were bad and what little we harvested the government took it over."

"In the name of what?"

"In the name of government plans."

"But, as far as I can understand, the government gets the surplus."

He smiled bitterly at this. "For how many years have you been an agronomist?" he asked.

"This is my first day as an agronomist."

"I see. You will learn soon."

Then he told me how the spring sowing had been good, promising a rich crop. How just then the government committee which sets the amount of the crop had arrived and had assigned the village a maximum quota. But after the departure of the committee there had been a drought and they had scarcely been able to fill the government's quota. They had been cleaned out.

"How about the peasants?"

"They got nothing. We don't even have seed grain. We must obtain it from the government which is interested in next year's crop."

"How do the people manage to live?"

"With nothing. You saw it today with me. Boiled beets, squash, or what not. Whatever a man can rig up or steal from the stores. My family has not seen the face of bread for months. My wife is going mad from privation. And not only my wife but every one."

"Do the authorities know about this?"

"The people believe they don't know. How else can you explain this helpless condition?"

"I too think the authorities do not know. It is impossible that they know it and yet they deliberately starve the people," I thought and I cooked up a plan in my mind.

4

Early in the morning I was awakened by the child's cries. The young husband was seated on the bench, sadly watching his wife drag the child. "I won't go, I won't go to the children's home," the child was protesting. But the mother dragged him away. I went to the father and asked, "What is the matter?" He smiled at me painfully.

"He does not want to go to the children's nursery," he said. "The mother must go rack up some beets. I work at the Kolkhoz barn. We cannot leave the baby at home alone. It is the same story each day. He doesn't want to go."

"Why?"

He waved his hand in despair. "If he is

well he will go," he said.

"Is the office open now?"

"It's a bit early yet."

"It doesn't matter. We will go just the same."

He hesitated a moment, then looking at me he said, "You will forgive me, Comrade agronomist, but we have nothing for breakfast."

I put my hand on his shoulder and said, "It's not necessary Peoter."

When we arrived at the office the Kolkhoz secretary was already at his desk. Soon after the president arrived.

"I see no one here. Are they going to stay away again?" the president asked.

"I doubt they will come, Comrade Smirnov."

"The bastards! Where are the foremen?"

"I sent them to round up the workers."

I approached the president. "Comrade Smirnov, what shall I do next?" I asked.

"You will now go to the fields together with the kolkhozniks. You will look after the ploughing and the collecting of the corn," he explained.

Just then one of the foremen entered the office. The secretary flew up. "How many workers did you round up?" he asked.

"Not a god damn soul," the foreman spat with an oath.

"How come not a soul?" the president roared at him.

"What the hell can I do?" the foreman protested. "Whichever door I knocked at they put me out with an oath. They don't want to come."

"Let me have the list," and Smirnov snatched the paper which listed the names of the peasants who refused to work.

"What did Kamarov say?"

"He said if work was important let our presidents go to work. We don't feel the need of orderers."

Smirnov was furious. "What did Karpich

say?" he asked.

"He said the same thing."

"Very well, skip those two and go call the rest once again. Tell them those who refuse to work will be expelled from the kolkhoz."

The foreman scratched his throat. "Comrade Smirnov," he pleaded, "please, don't let me say that one."

"Why not? Are you sorry for them?"

"No, on the contrary."

"Why not then?"

"Please, Comrade president. If I tell them that even those who are willing to work will stay away. Don't you know that all of them want to keep out of kolkhozes?"

"Don't talk foolish," the president replied irritated. "You are talking like a Koulak."

I looked at the secretary but he pretended not to pay any heed to me and kept scribbling on a piece of paper. Just then the cart which was to take us to the field arrived. The driver, a young man in his teens, entered the office, looked around him with a sarcastic smile, then asked:

"Where are the men? I have waited long enough. It is tough on the horses."

The president could stand it no longer. "Keep your sarcasm for your Koulak uncle and send it to Siberia," he burst out.

The boy was scared, he blushed, then apologized:

"I did not mean to be sarcastic, Comrade president. Besides, I have nothing to do with my uncle."

"Don't tell me that."

The boy was even more scared, and not to aggravate the dangerous conversation, he left the office in haste. Watching him through the window, I saw that he was scratching and caressing the horses, and was looking through the corner of his eye if the president was noticing his diligence. The secretary who had been pouring on his papers, raised his head and commented, "He is the son of a viper. He too should have been exiled together with his uncle."

Presently, the president of the village council and the party secretary arrived at the office. They were debating hotly, with eye and eyebrows, and swearing at the peasants who refused to work. I did not hear a single one of those village bosses who asked the question why the peasants refused to report to work. I did not see them try to discover the causes of this extraordinary phenomenon and to find a remedy for them. No, all they did was to swear at the peasants who refused to go to work.

By noon, of the foreseen 60 odd hands, scarcely 10 had reported to work, and these were largely old men and women. They filed into a cart and I took a seat beside them. As the cart started to move, the workers started to swear and threaten to leave the village, go to Uzbekistan or somewhere. They gave me the impression they were going to a hard labor camp. Finally they quieted down and took notice of me. "Who are you?" asked an old man whose face struck me as rather evil. I hesitated to answer until one of the company volunteered sarcastically: "Akramon." The Russian "Akramon" is a sarcastic distortion of the word agronomist. My face became flushed at the insult but, animated by my confusion, they started to make fun of my office. It was obvious that their railings were not directed at either me or my office. They were merely cooling off their very understandable indignation. But making fun of me, they were ridiculing the soviet government.

By the time we arrived at the cooperative farm it was already dark. Our cart stopped in front of a shack. Instantly a company of dirty women rushed outside. The newcomers scrambled out of the cart and mingled with the women. No one paid any attention to me so I stood there at the door all alone. The driver who was busy with his horse noticed me and said:

"Go in, Comrade agronomist."

"Who is the foreman here?"

"Just a minute," and he entered the shack.

"Comrade agronomist, please come in."

It was the voice of a woman standing at the door. "I am the director of work here."

She was not a bad looking woman and I took an instant liking for her. We stepped inside. By the dim light of a kerosene lamp I could see some sixty people in the room. The room was filthy and the air reeked. The women who had just returned from work were lying on the straw covered ground. The newcomers had mingled with the women and were carrying on boisterously, shouting and swearing. The youngmen were hugging the filthy bedraggled women, kissing them, and slapping them resoundingly on the bottoms.

With due respect the woman director offered me her place, a ramshackle bed hoisted on four sticks in a corner of the shack, which squeaked at the slightest touch. When after a long reluctance I finally accepted the offer and sat down on the bed, the evil-faced old man, hearing the squeaking of the boards, turned to the woman director and said with a cunning and understanding smile, "Marousya, they gave the comrade agronomist a very bad place. Those squeakings of the boards will cause no end of disturbance."

A Homeric laughter rang in the shack, but Marousya, instead of resenting it, answered laughingly: "Don't teach him who has already learned his lesson."

At those words I pretty near fell down from my shame, and scarcely managing to hang onto myself, I snatched my bundle and rushed to the door.

"Where are you going?" Marousya blocked my way.

"I better sleep in the cart. I . . . I . . . I . . ."

I could not finish the sentence because again the shack was bursting from the guffaws. When the laughter died down, the evil-faced old man again taunted me: "The

Comrade agronomist is right; the cart is more suitable for . . ."

Only that day did I fully understand the Russian's indifference towards life's hardships, the situation of today, and the unknown tomorrow. The psychology of that people is wonderful. We had entered a women's shack and that was the reason why Marousya was kicking the men out who had come to joke with the fair sex.

"Beat it now, beat it. Leave us alone so we can sleep. We've got to get up early in the morning."

I wanted to bunk with the men but she would not let me, arguing that their room was crowded and terribly filthy. I was obliged to return to Marousya's bed. Without undressing, and using my bundle for a pillow, I lay on the bed. A little later, as I peeped around me, I saw that the room was deserted of all the men and there I was, like a Sultan, sleeping in his harem.

5

The next day I began my agronomical work. I looked after the ploughing, the sowing, harvesting and drying the corn. I slept in a shepherd's tent which was quite clean as compared with the men's and the women's shacks. We all ate from the same kettle. In the morning we each got a dish of Shpot (a porridge of flour and water); at noon the same thing supplemented by two boiled potatoes which replaced the bread. The evening meal was the same thing.

A like nourishment at first caused me extreme stomach pains but they soon disappeared. My body slowly adjusted itself to the new conditions. The third day of my work, toward evening, when we men folk were assembled in the women's shack, a man came from the village bringing with him some flour and told us that they had arrested and whisked off Kamarov and Karp Karpich by night. All were stunned by the news.

"Those poor old men?" one of them ven-

tured in surprise.

"Why?"

The newsbearer hung his head. "How should I know?" he said wonderingly, "they say they were British spies, that they had gone to London and had disclosed our state secrets to strangers."

The old man with the evil face whom they called Vasya taunted: "The rogues! Do you see how important men they were and we were not aware of it. I thought Kamarov was so starved he did not even have strength enough to walk to the stove. How could he have gone to London and come back?"

Marousya was a party member and therefore she had to say something. "Don't say it Diadya (Uncle) Vasya," she observed. "Every thing is possible."

"What is possible?" Vasya countered. "You think going to London and coming back is as easy as going to bed with the men folk in the fields?"

Marousya joined in the general laughter but at once became serious again. "I think," she said, "our government never makes a mistake."

Vasya was carrying the matter too far and I was afraid he might share the same fate of Kamarov and Karpich. I decided therefore to warn him. As we were breaking off to retire for the night I purposely stopped him. "Diadya Vasya," I said, "pull out your pouch. Let's have a smoke."

"Sure, sure," he said, "but I have no cigarette paper."

I gave him half of the paper book in my pocket.

"Diadya Vasya," I remonstrated him, "you are talking too much. You will get yourself in trouble. You are an old man."

He crushed the spark flint in his hand and stared at me. Then, suddenly, he hugged and kissed me. "You look like a good boy," he said. "My blessings on you. Thank you, thank you." And saying it, he disappeared in the dark.

I was lying down when the shepherd came, said, "good evening," sat down and took his head in his hands. I noticed his white beard was shaking from his inner emotion.

"What is the matter, Diadya Valodya?" I asked.

He raised his head and with a sad look said, "Nothing, my boy, nothing."

"No, Diadya Valodya, tell me the truth. What happened?"

He stood up, looked around cautiously, then came close and said mysteriously:

"They have taken Kamarov and Karpich away."

"So what?" I replied with specious indifference. "I already knew it."

"You knew? From where?"

I told him that we had got the news at the women's shack.

"Then it's true. Poor Kamarov! Poor Karpich!"

"Are they your friends?"

"No, we were comrades in arms."

"Comrades in arms? In what fight?"

"In the civil fights. We were the ones who established the Soviet regime."

That night, at my special urging, Diadya Valodya told me many things. I found out that Kamarov, Karpich, Diadya Vasya and Diadya Valodya had played a big role in the civil war and had shed blood in the firm belief the new order would bring freedom and happiness to the oppressed Russian people, but who had been disillusioned because they had been double crossed.

"And now, and now," the hero of the civil war could not finish the sentence and abruptly broke away.

6

One month had passed from the time I started my work in the village. During that month many things happened and I learned a lot. The dreadful reality of the Soviet village was clear to me now. I already knew the causes of that poor people's misery but

the education I had received would not let me believe my own eyes. I was not to blame in this. When I was still in school, at the university, in the street, or wherever one could preach, I had heard that our government is the only people's government which is concerned with the condition of the people, lends a willing ear to their plights, and exists solely for the amelioration of their sufferings. I thought all these wrongs were committed without the knowledge of the higher authorities, and that, in many instances, it is the individual who is guilty and not the reigning doctrine.

The misery, the oppressions, and the persecutions which I saw in the Village of Kroushke shook my implicit faith in the legality of the government, it's true, but I could not tear myself loose from that faith all the same and persisted in thinking that there was a misunderstanding here which would soon disappear, would be corrected, if only the higher authorities were advised about it. So I conceived the idea of making a trip to the regional headquarters and give a full report of what I had seen.

That idea was my undoing as later events proved, but at the time I was not worldly wise enough. First of all, however, I had to make myself presentable inasmuch as I had turned unusually dirty during the past month. I needed a haircut and a shave. I had to go to the village, particularly in view of the fact that the fields were practically deserted. The new help failed to appear, while the old help were prostrated by dysentery, caused largely by the uniform and unsanitary food.

It was late autumn. Moist clouds blanketed the skies and fearlessly descended on the landscape, hiding everything in a thick fog. It rained incessantly, drenching the peasants who, to begin with, were woefully ill-clad. That was no life but a nightmare of the dreams, long and interminable. And one day I boarded the cart which was going to

the village with a load of corn.

"Do you know if there will be a cart from the village to the regional headquarters tomorrow?" I asked the driver.

"Why not? I must deliver this corn to the regional headquarters tomorrow," the driver replied.

"To deliver it?" I asked amazed. "I thought the villagers' quota was already completed.

"From where? he shook his head despairingly.

My heart was wrung from the pain. I know how hard we had worked to raise and harvest that corn. I knew the workers were starving and how they wished they could have some of that corn which would be goose food, in order to be able to put a slice of bread in the hands of their children. But the corn was going to fill the government stores. That was the last cart load. It meant the population of Kroushke Village had to go without bread.

There is something radically wrong here," I said to myself. "There is a misunderstanding, or else how to explain such an appalling situation?" The more I thought about it the more I was determined to remove that error, that misunderstanding.

"What's new in the village?" I asked the driver.

He laughed, "There is a new liquor store," he replied. "You can buy all the Raki you want. There is even no rationing."

"Who opened the new store?"

"Who else can open a new store if not the government?" he answered with a surprised look.

It started to rain. We were without overcoats or wraps and we got drenched to the bone. When we arrived at the Kolkhoz quarters I was soaking wet. I rushed to the office but there was no one there. I sat down on a bench and started to look all around me. It seemed the office had undergone some transformation. There was a larger number of

portraits of government leaders hanging from the walls and the front wall bore a full length inscription of Stalin's famous words: "Life has become joyful, life has become happy again, Comrades."

It was up to me to avail myself of that joyful life to dry my clothes and find a place for the night. Where could I go? I had to wait until one of the big shots came and made an arrangement for my lodging. But I was already shivering from the cold and coughing, so, without any invitation or asking his permission, I hurried to my good friend Peoter to spend the night.

It was dark inside the hut when I entered in.

"Peoter, Peoter," I called.

"Who is there?" I heard a woman's feeble voice from above the fireplace. "Oh, pardon me Madame, it is I, the agronomist. Where is Peoter?" He went to the nursery after the baby. Please be seated."

And the poor woman relapsed into a sinister caughing spell. When Peoter returned he received me like an old friend. He lit the lamp and under its dim light I noticed that he had aged one year in a short month.

"What is the matter, Peoter?" I asked.

He nearly broke down, his lower jaw trembled, but he controlled himself and whispered to me: "My wife has T.B." Then, by way of changing the conversation, he turned to his wife and said, "Manya, the agronomist is here."

"I know. Let me have the baby."

The misery and pain of the others made me forget my wet clothes, but Peoter noticed it and asked me to take them off. I had a fever that night but felt pretty good in the morning. I went to the office where the Kol-khoz barber gave me a shave and haircut in exchange for my workday checks. Then I gave my report to the president of the Kol-khez on my work.

"I am going to the regional headquarters today," I told him.

"Why?" he asked indifferently.

"Business, some personal business. I will return tomorrow."

The night I had spent at Peoter's. His misery, his wife's illness, the stories he had told me of the sufferings of the people had fortified my determination to go to the regional headquarters, tell the whole story, and save the people from utter ruin.

7

I rapped on the office door of regional director Comrade Yegorov at the same hour when first I had appeared before him. Again he was standing before his desk, busy rifling his desks.

"Come in," he boomed from inside.

I greeted him. This time he seemed to have recognized my voice and raised his head.

"Ah, citizen Vardanian, it is you. Please take a seat," he spoke cordially, pointing to the opposite chair. He stopped rummaging his papers.

"Aren't you going back today?"

"I think not. Tomorrow is Sunday."

"Yes, you may stay," he condescended. "But since we cannot meet tomorrow I will listen to your report now."

"Comrade Yegorov," I began, "I have come to see you not about my personal affairs nor in connection with my work, but about a matter which concerns the community of Kroushke Village."

"That's interesting," Yegerov replied as he eased himself into his chair.

"Comrade Yegorov, due to a misunderstanding the people of that village are afflicted with famine."

"Just a minute," he interrupted me, "did I hear you say they have a famine?"

"Yes, famine, because the entire crop has been turned over to the government."

"That's very interesting," he said with a surprised look as if he was hearing of it for the first time.

"I knew it but I thought the higher au-

thorities knew nothing about it," I replied avidly, and encouraged by his demeanor, I told him all about what the workers of Kroushke Village had gone through. He listened to me with a cold immobile face, then said with a cunning softness:

"Please put that story in writing so I can present it to the higher authorities.

"Very well, I will put it into writing this evening," I replied.

"No, please put it down right now, we can't meet tomorrow. Here is paper and pen." And he shoved before me a sheet of clean paper and a pen. And I put down all about the misery and the sufferings of the people of Kroushke Village.

He kept smoking impatiently until I finished writing.

"Now please sign it."

I signed it.

He picked up the writing, swiftly glanced over it, then folded it and put it in his pocket.

"Where are you going to spend the night?"

"I think the same place where I spent my first night if all the beds are not taken."

"We'll see. Let us go together."

Together we stepped out. The door of the room where I was to sleep was shut. They found Ivan who told us that all the beds were unoccupied. "That's very good," rejoiced Comrade Yegorov, "You'll stay here then?"

"I have no other place."

"All right, go to bed and rest. You look tired." And he extended his hand to bid me good by.

That moment I looked straight in his face and instantly I felt the pain of a vague, sinister premonition in my heart. He lowered his eyes and tried to get away from there as fast as he could. When he had receded quite a little way he turned around and beckened Ivan. Ivan ran to him and soon after he returned and opened the door.

It was half dark inside and Ivan asked if he should light a lamp or if I wanted to retire at once. I told him I didn't need any light,

that I was tired and would go to bed at once. After Ivan left I lay on my bed and instantly fell asleep.

In my dream I saw the people of Kroushke holding a public assembly. Seated on the platform were Comrade Yegorov, the village and Kolkhoz chiefs, as well as the party secretary.

"Comrades," Yegorov was addressing the crowd, "in regard to your sufferings, it's true only recently we learned, but finally we learned. The Soviet government, which is the only workingmen's government in the world, will never let you starve to death as do the capitalistic governments to their subjects. Beginning tomorrow you shall get your entire crop which, due to a misunderstanding, has been taken away from you."

At this point I started to cheer and the whole audience joined in the applause. They all were clapping their hands, especially the children who, held in their mothers' arms, were winking their emaciated and dirty eyelashes, or beating against their bloated bellies. Yegorov was looking at them with a broad joyful grin.

"Comrades," he was saying, "beginning with tomorrow you will not only have bread, but also sugar, soap, kerosene, clothes, and shoes."

He could not finish the sentence because the entire hall rang with the thunderous applause.

And suddenly I saw Kamarov on the stage whose being free did not surprise me. He was grinning broadly, wanting to make a speech. "Comrades," he said, "here is Garbich, Diadya Vasya, Diadya Valedia and others with whom I shed blood for the establishment of the Soviet government. Comrades, it goes to show then that we were not mistaken in what we did. We see it today in acts and deeds, we see it in the warm patronage of our government."

Again the people started to cheer and shout from joy.

Overwhelmed with joy, I too wanted to make a speech but just then a heavy hand clamped on my shoulder, and like one who has been stung, I jumped to my feet. There was a light in the room. The hand on my shoulder was shaking me. The hand and the shaking were so cold and evil that I shuddered bodily. I could not understand what was going on around me and closed my eyes to sleep again but I was finally aroused by the vigorous shaking. I heard a terror-inspiring chuckle and an ineffably sullen soulless voice commaded, "Get up and dress."

I looked in the direction of the voice. It was a chekist, revolver in hand, staring at me with an evil, malignant, and inexpressibly exultant face.

"What do you want of me?" I asked, without realizing that from that moment on I had no right to ask such questions.

"The regional committee is in session, they want to see you at once."

"Right this midnight?" I wondered, but convinced now that they were in earnest I started to dress hastily. "It seems Yegorov is pressing the matter," the error is being corrected," I thought, remembering my dream. Only when I was ready to leave did I see a second chekist with revolver in hand, and a third chekist with revolver in hand, and Ivan holding onto his heavy club, standing there at the door. His look at me was unbearable, insolent, triumphant, he looked like he owned the world.

By this time I realized I was under arrest but being inept at such things I did not realize the enormity of it. At the courtyard of the regional building there was a profound silence. All the buildings were pitch dark, not a gleam of light anywhere. We were walking along the length of the yard. One of the chekists, revolver in hand, was leading the way, the other two were covering the rear. Ivan was keeping pace with the leader, his heavy club on his shoulder. When we

reached the building they took me to a room which was empty with the exception of a few stools.

"Search him," ordered the chief to the other two and left the room.

"Take your clothes off," ordered one of the chekists in his turn, and as I hesitated, he roared at me: "Who do you think I am talking to?"

Reluctantly I began to undress and for the first time in my life I felt myself infinitely degraded, my ego and my self respect completely shattered. I felt it, and I do not know why, my eyes were filled with tears.

One of the chekists snatched my coat and began to search it while the other impatiently waited for me to take off my pants. I stood there in my shirt and shoes.

"Take them off," the first chekist shouted again as he flung aside my coat. He grabbed my collar, pulled open the buttons, and with one jerk he ripped off my shirt.

"Take off your shoes, your socks, you sir, you Agha, you king," shouted the second chekist mockingly as he flung my pants to the floor.

They had turned into spitfires, veritable madmen. They felt that I was now the object of torture for them, without a soul, and without the capacity to feel pain, a human object which should be dismembered alive, burned on live coals of fire, to be beaten and massacred, to be subjected to all the tortures in the world, for the gratification of their sadist vengeance.

I was very surprised that they could not find the jackknife in my pocket in spite of the fact that they searched my pockets several times. But a little later when they took me to another room for making a list of the articles in my possession, I was again surprised to see my knife, my note book and several small items lying there on the table. Only then it occurred to me that they had searched my clothes while I was asleep in bed.

"Are these your articles?" asked one whom I was seeing for the first time.

"Yes," I replied, "but how did they get here?"

He pretended not to hear me. "Sign here," he commanded. Then he wrapped up the objects with the exception of my notebook in a piece of paper, tied the package with a string, wrote my name, and put it in the drawer.

Presently the man who had arrested me came back. "Is it finished?" he asked.

"It is finished," replied the man who had made the list.

"All right, let's go," the leader said to me.

Passing through a number of rooms we came to a stop in front of a door which was covered with leather to make the room sound proof. My leader opened the room and we stepped in. The fixture of this room was quite different from all the other rooms I had seen. First of all it was a large room, warm and well lighted. The floor was covered with rugs. There were chairs along the walls. In the center of the room there was a large desk on which rested a shaded lamp, piles of paper, and a telephone. In front of the desk was seated a huge chekist with a large head, full cheeks, and the bloodshot eyes of an angry bull. When we entered his face was twitching. My leader made me stand in front of the desk.

"What is your surname?" he asked me, and his voice quaked like a rock which has broken off from the side of a mountain.

"Vardanian."

"Where did you work?"

"At the Village of Kroushke."

"In what capacity?"

"Agronomist."

He picked from the desk my writing to Yegorov the day before.

"Did you write this?"

"Yes."

"Look well, is this your signature?" he clamped a finger on my signature.

"It's mine."

"What did you say in that writing?"

I was awfully tired and wanted to sit down, but the chairs were too far away, nor did he invite me to sit down.

"It seems you have already read it and know the contents. Why do you ask?"

He got terribly irritated at this and his cheeks turned purple from anger.

"Answer my question" he thundered.

"I have written in it that the people of Kroushke are starving."

"Do you say so now too?"

"How can I deny it when I myself wrote it?"

"You are being very foolish."

"I am telling the truth, I . . ."

I wanted to continue, I wanted to say that I could prove my contention with facts, when I heard a voice say to me:

"Is that the way to speak to the comrade chief?"

At that moment it seemed my skull was constricted by a steely ring. I shrunk from the unutterable pain and seized my head in my two hands to prevent myself from falling. My fingers were wet with the hot blood. The blow which I expected was not repeated but the bodily pain filled my whole essence for a long time and it seemed to me my scalp was being torn off from my head. The feeling of shame of a man who is mortally wounded plugged my throat, because I wanted to roar, to protest, but only my mouth opened and shut, without letting out the feeblest whisper.

It was plain that the man who had hit me was not my inquisitor. The blow had fallen from behind me and for that reason I looked behind me. One step from me was standing the second chekist, with his legs apart. He was holding in his hand a flexible rubber whip of the thickness of a child's arm, swinging it lightly. The chekist was watching me with a diabolical glee. Our eyes met. The eyes of the victim and the tormentor, the

transfixion of anger and a beastly joy.

I knew that that terrible blow was only the beginning of my future tortures, the prelude to my medieval inquisition. And for that very reason I wanted to pounce on him, but apparently surmising my intentions, the two chekists started to chortle and to mock me so that I stood there rooted to the ground.

"Look at me," the inquisitor suddenly boomed, "look at me."

Mechanically I looked at him.

"Who put you to this?" he asked.

"No one; that is only my idea," I scarcely managed to move my jaws from my excruciating pain.

"You are lying."

"I don't know how to lie."

He was about to say something when suddenly the telephone rang. He lifted the receiver, meanwhile making a signal to the second chekist.

"I hear you," he said through the instrument, "it is I, Cheumalov. Yes, Yes, Yes. Tomorrow? What time? Good, good, good by."

I was listening tensely. True I understood nothing, but I felt that the conversation had to do with me. Obviously he was talking to the Central Cheka because his voice was humble, submissive, and slavish. From all indications my case had been brought to the attention of the Central Cheka having caused quite a commotion within a few hours. It seemed I was regarded as a formidable anti-Soviet agent, propagandist, and a dangerous foe of the government.

The telephonic conversation and the fact that they did not question me that night clearly showed that I had fallen into an abyss so deep I could never hope to get out. And in truth the next day the investigator from the Central Cheka asked me questions about which I had not the slightest idea. The famine of Kroushke Village was pigeon-holed. Instead, they connected me with Kamarov and Karpich with whom I had not

exchanged one word in all my life. They connected me with such men whom I had never seen in my life nor heard of them. They ascribed to me such acts to create which one needed a very lively imagination and plenty of time to sit down and invent. And to make me confess things I had never done they subjected me to unutterable, unimaginable tortures, beatings and castigations which are beyond the imagination and the conscience of human beings.

After hanging up the receiver, the investigator turned to my tormentor.

"Let's go," said the latter, yanking me rudely.

We tracked back along the same route and entered the first room where my searchers were sitting and carelessly smoking and laughing.

"Yevo, Yamou," (Take him to the cell) ordered my escort.

The word "cell" terrified me and instinctively I looked at the window. I wondered if I could jump out of the window. But the panes were tightly shut, reinforced by iron bars. Those who were laughing suddenly became serious, they drew their automatics, and one of them commanded:

"Keep moving!"

I was sandwiched between two chekists. We walked through the long lane and climbed down into a cellar. We reached an iron door which blocked a narrow aisle. One of the chekists opened the door with a key, saw us in, and closed the door. On either side of the aisle there were closed iron doors of which I had no idea at the time. We stopped in front of a door. The chekist turned an electric button and opened the door.

"Get in!"

At the very threshold I saw what I was getting into. It was a narrow cell, one meter wide, and a meter and a half long. There was a pool of water on the floor, caused by the drippings from the wall. The electric light hanging from the ceiling cast a dim

light on the wet walls, and the repulsive odor of damp cold and foul air was more than nauseating.

I recoiled in horror. "I won't get in there, I said.

"You will," the chekist said, and seizing my two hands from behind he made me face the cell. At the same moment I felt a blow on my neck which brought a million

stars to my eyes. From the impact of the blow, I reluctantly ran the entire length of the cell, hit my head on the wall, and fell on the floor face down.

I heard a diabolical chuckle and the iron door creaked shut upon me. They had to treat me like this because I had committed an error.

(Translated by J. G. M.)

TWO STANZAS

I

*I walk through a park of lonely people
A park of paradise in virgin guise,
A girlish laugh—
Then the insane voices with frantic cries of empty hearts
And whirling thoughts
 (thoughts lost in endless cycles of thought—
 and those of maddening magnitude).
But too soon paradise is lost
And summer breezes turn to frost.*

II

*Then an unknown girl across the pond
sways vast miles of water
Between me and the moon,
Then life's sweet chatter
suddenly ceased; for soon the pond will rise
and take our thoughts
 (thoughts lost in endless cycles of thought—
 and those of maddening magnitude)
Submerging them to hidden depths
Never to rise from their fathomless paths.*

—DIKRAN AKILLIAN

FATMA AND ASAD

By SHIRVANZADE

(Translated by James G. Mandalian)

Toward evening the City of Sharari Shirvan came to life, having shaken off the stupor of the suffocating midday heat. The bazaar was a-hustle and a-bustle. The vendors of fruits, vegetables, milk and cheese were chanting the praises of their wares in ornate oriental quatrains. The merchants and the artisans were closing their shops, and Armenians and Turks were returning to their homes.

In the distance one could hear the chiming of the church bells, while the shrill undulating call of Molla Khallil from the minaret of Juma Mosque inflamed the most stone-hearted Mussuman with the fire of Allah. The devout were executing the *Salavat*—intoning the name of Mohammed and rubbing their faces with their right hands—, were going through their ablutions, and were uttering the prayer of the holy *Namaz*—*La ilaha ill-allah, Mohammed el Resul-ullah*. There is no God but God, and Mohammed is his prophet.

At that moment a young man was hurrying along the street. His face was grave and obviously indifferent to his surroundings, but the gravity of that expression had nothing to do with the misery of the beggar, nor was it like the grief of the merchant whose ship had been wrecked, nor the anxiety of the Mussulman who had neglected his daily *Namaz*. He was passing through the bazaar, ascending the ward of the city which is called Imamlu. No one nor anything attracted his attention. Nor were his orthodox Mussulman feelings offended by the notorious Dervish Ahat who, to flatter the Armenians, was singing to the top of his voice: *Isa gueldi, samavatdan khabar verdi kiamatdan*—Jesus

came down from heaven; he brought tidings unto the world.

The young man was shuffling along ramblingly, his head lowered and his right hand tucked in his silver belt, looking more like the ill starred Miajnou who, having left his father's home, had headed for the desert and sun-burnt plains of Arabia singing his love of Leyli. He was like the great prophet's beloved Keybi who, sunk deep in imagination, improvised one of those paradise songs with which the Arab poet delighted the Prophet. He passed the bazaar as far as half of the ward of Imamlu, then cutting into a narrow street he came to a stop in front of a half-ruined house. The street was deserted, only in the distance a group of urchins were playing and a bare-footed half-naked man was picking up the white linen hanging from the walls of the public bath house. He released his right hand from his belt, straightened the edges of his short violet-colored garment, and stroked his newly-cropping black mustach. He was a towering youth, one of the notorious braves of Shirvan, known to all by his manly face, his tall stature, his athletic build, and his fearless heart. In short, he was Asad of Sari-Topragh.

His hands resting on his waist under the folds of his thick short woolen jacket, he faced the dark gray doors of a small newly-built house and stood there listening long. Judging from his occasional sighs, the unusual luster in his fiery eyes and his impatient gestures, it was obvious that he was looking for some one.

Suddenly his somber face was illuminated by a glad smile. One of the dark gray doors gently opened revealing the head of a young

girl covered with a silken head dress and her forehead adorned with rows of Turkish gold pieces.

In a flash Asad was near the girl. It would take a very delicate sense of hearing to enable one to comprehend what the young girl whispered. She was so delicate, timorous, and hesitating. And what Asad had to say was commensurate with such delicacy, precisely for those rosy lips which were conveying to him the scent of heavenly bliss. He was standing five steps from the dark gray door, his waist leaning against the wall to remain unseen by the immodest gaze of casual passers by.

What they were whispering to each other no one knew except He who can search the hearts of all mortals and to Whom there is nothing hidden. As to us, we would be trespassing against the truth if we insisted that the whispering lasted more than five minutes.

The dark gray door was again closed and the forehead adorned with Turkish gold pieces disappeared, taking along with it a deep sigh from Asad. Again he was left alone. His face was illuminated now, the thin blood veins of his eyes more red, while his broad manly chest was pounding from his respiration.

"Almighty God, give me patience," he uttered unto himself. But his words could not pierce the firmly closed doors. He was still waiting, but, alas, the dark gray doors were getting darker and they did not open. Like a hungry wolf, growling under his breath, he was pacing the deserted street back and forth. The darkness was thickening, the bright stars were shining in the blue sky, there was a heavy silence, the bazaar had quieted down. Presently he heard the sound of foot steps in the distance, a dark figure loomed at the corner of the street. Asad kept pacing back and forth.

The figure was slowly moving forward. Asad did not hear the sound of his foot steps. The figure was quite close now. At

that instant Asad faced about and the dim light of his cigarette revealed a fat man of medium height with a short dyed beard. Recognizing Asad, the stranger was rooted to the ground. He was furious. Who was he?

II

The moon had made seven cycles from the day Asad's eye fell on Fatma, the daughter of Molla Ghani of Imamlu. The first time he had seen her in the ward of Sari-Topragh, when she was a guest in the home of her sister Bakim, the wife of Khalil of Sari-Topragh. At that moment, when Fatma was seated in the courtyard of her sister without her veil, Asad was exercising a pigeon from the roof top of the house. He saw Fatma and at once his heart was aflame. And what Persian could remain indifferent once he saw Fatma? Those black lustrous eyes, those arch-shaped brows, that round beauty spot on her forehead, those long lashes, that white rippling throat, and especially those twin pomegranates hidden under the transparent blouse which shook to and fro every time Fatma strutted.

From that day Asad tormented his mother day and night, urging her to go to Fatma and disclose his love for her as a preliminary to the betrothal. The old woman Nourjihan tried once to broach the subject to Bakim but she got such a reply that she was forced never again to mention the subject. Fatma was beautiful and quite rich. Many *Begs* and *Hadji's* had sought her hand, but the only definite thing was the talk about Hadji Alyakbar. Hadji was the wealthiest man in the ward of Imamlu. Whereas, who was Asad? He was a common silversmith. . . .

But Asad was not discouraged. As against Hadji Alyakbar's three imposing caravans and his great name he had only one weapon—his manly handsome build and his stout heart. Asad was fearless. And he decided to compete with Hadji with this weapon.

It happened that Fatma once again was a guest at her sister's home. Asad slipped to

the roof top of their house, and from his vantage point began to hurl arrows with his eyes at the heart of the beauty. Fatma had heard about him, knew that he was handsome and brave, and the ring leader of the gang of Sari-Tagh youths. Fatma saw Asad and smiled at him, she blushed and fled inside the house.

That was a portentous sign. Asad's hopes soared high. His heart aflame, often, when Fatma stayed away for a long time, he would come to Imamlu. He would come to watch his beloved from a distance, so he could sleep peacefully in the night. But he did not always succeed in this. The street was not always deserted, and Fatma was not always incautious, sticking her head out of the door.

Hadji Alyakbar heard about the secret, although hitherto innocent relationship between Fatma and Asad, once he saw with his own eyes, Asad standing in front of Fatma's house in the evening. He swore he would make an end of Asad's foolish visits. And now, in the darkness of the evening, the two champions were face to face.

"Kiafir!" — Blasphemer — shouted Hadji Alyakbar, taking his hand to his waist under the folds of his thick woolen jacket.

Asad was silent. If it had been a bit lighter, one would have noticed the contemptuous look he cast at Hadji. But Hadji drew closer and closer until he completely blocked Asad's passage.

"*Salaamn Aleykum*—Greetings unto thee"—Asad said, controlling his temper.

Without responding to the greeting with the customary "*Aleykum Salaam*," Hadji backed a step or two, and with a haughty voice warned Asad:

"God is my witness, I will not let you pass until you swear to me that you will never set foot in this street again."

Asad smiled contemptuously.

"Swear it, Kiafir," repeated Hadji, "then you may pass, you cowardly scoundrel."

"Hadji," replied Asad with perfect com-

posure, "Asad has never spilt blood in his life; he does not want to spill blood."

"Blood!" exclaimed Hadji, infuriated at Asad's audacity, "Who are you to be able to spill blood? For God's sake, look who is talking"—he turned his face aside, regardless of the fact that there was no one in the street except the two antagonists—"a dissolute cub from Sari Topragh dares to take away Hadji Alyakbar's girl! Ha, Allah himself cannot take Molla Sadik's daughter from my hand, to say nothing of a dog like you."

Asad's blood rushed to his head. But he still had enough strength to control his fury. He said quietly:

"Fatma will go to him whom she loves."

"Ha, Ha, Ha, Fatma loves the silversmith Asad, Ha, Ha, Ha."

"God knows it's enough. Hadji, you already have two women. Greed will ruin a home, Hadji."

"Even if I had forty women, again I would not let scoundrels like you take Fatma."

Asad's patience was at an end. He could no longer stand the revilings of his adversary:

"A curse upon your title of Hadji, shameless creature!" he shouted at him furiously.

"Shut up, Kiafir!"

Before he had finished uttering the last word, Hadji stepped back and drew a black object from under the folds of his thick woolen jacket. Asad saw the sinister movement through the darkness. He hurled himself on Hadji, seized his arms and gave him such a vigorous shove that Hadji tumbled over some ten steps back. Before he could come to his senses and his cries for help, Asad picked up the revolver, threw it on the opposite roof, and directing his steps to the height, disappeared in the dark.

III

Again it was evening; again the *Muezzins*—the Mussulman priests—were chanting the call to prayer and the Christian church bells

were inviting the worshippers to the house of God. A gentle breeze was blowing from the western part of the city, so leisurely, as if it was coming from the cemeteries, from that dark world of the dead, with its deathly voice:

"Don't be so proud, O man, because here is your last resting place!"

But man was becoming haughty, especially the inhabitants of Imamlu. About ten ringleaders of youthful gangs were assembled in front of Alyakbar's towering mansion. In the center was Hadji himself, a yellow silken *Aba*—jacket—on his shoulders, holding in his hand a long red switch. Their hands resting on their belts, the youths were listening reverently to Hadji's following peroration:

"Every man must be jealous for the honor of his ward. We of Imamlu, beginning with our fathers' fathers, have been zealous for our honor, and must be so especially now. God knows my blood is boiling within my veins as I recall the last visit to this street of that son of a Kiafir. You may spit on Hadji Alyakbar, the son of Hadji Kiarim, that that night he did not fill the belly of that scoundrel with smoke. But what could I do? The scoundrel escaped me like a rabbit. I was so mad I threw my revolver on the roof top. But what is done is done. 'He who attacks from behind wounds only the heel,' the old proverb says. This is a question of your honor. A hoodlum of Sari Topragh has insulted the honor of your ward; it is your duty to stop him from coming here. Vallah Billah, if I were not a Hadji, right now I would throw off my silken jacket, would pick up a switch, and would attack Sari Topragh single handed. But it does not become stalwarts like you to see me go alone and dishonor my beard. Am I right?"

"Yes, yes, Hadji, I mean you are saying the right thing," spoke Heyrat the roast-vendor who had lost one of his eyes during the *Maharram* fights.

"Do you hear, fellows? Shame, shame upon

us if we wait any longer?" put in Meyti, one of the fiercest switch-wielders of Imamlu.

Bird hunter Askar who was a noted slinger, who had blinded two men and had wounded another in the leg, said it would be cowardice to wait longer and that they should start a street fight with the Sari Topragh gang this very day. All agreed with him, but Hadji was in no hurry. He offered each ring-leader a cigarette and said:

"Don't be in a hurry. If it is not today, it will be tomorrow. It makes no difference when. But there is still one thing."

"Command it, Command it Hadji," all the ringleaders shouted in unison, placing their hands on their chests and listening to Hadji.

"Suppose we start the street fight now," continued Hadji rubbing his beard, "in my opinion that fight will not be worth one kopek if the real cause of the fight comes out unscathed."

"Asad?" they all asked in unison.

"Yes, Asad," replied Hadji, "I swear by the name of Holy Ali that it is your sacred duty to destroy him, destroy him at all cost. Heyrat, you will shatter your switch on his head first of all. Askar, you will aim your sling at him, and so with all the rest of you. Do you hear?"

"*Bar sheshma, bar sheshma*—upon my eye—we will do it," they promised one by one, placing their hands on their eyes and bowing before Hadji in token of obedience.

"Long live! Bravo young lads, you are truly brave men," approved Hadji with boundless satisfaction. "Now let's go to my home and have some tea. There we will talk about the details of the fight."

Half reluctantly, half bashfully, and looking at each other, the ringleaders followed Hadji Alyakbar and entered his home.

IV

It was morning. Standing there before his shop, nine-fingered Mahmoud was soaking a cap made of spotted hide of Shiraz and beating it into shape. Just then Meyti, the

cap maker of Imamlu deliberately passed in front of him and caught a few drops of the water which Mahmud was sprinkling on his cap. Meyti stopped short and made a very indecent remark whereupon Mahmoud begged his pardon. But Meyti, who the night before had promised Hadji Alyakbar and his companions he would provoke a fight, retaliated with an even sharper insult. Mahmoud was a man of honor and replied to Meyti in kind for which he received a resounding slap on his cheek.

The gang from Imamlu were ready and in a moment they were all over Mahmoud. A few natives of Sari Topragh hastened to the aid of Mahmoud and presently the fight was on. At once all the shops of the cap makers were closed. The beaten and shattered Sari Topraghers hastened back to their ward and on their way they told Asad, who was the cause of the fight, what had happened.

Asad was not inclined to fight but he was their leader and it was his duty to avenge the honor of his companions. Like a flash word was spread throughout the bazaar that the gangs of Sari Topragh and Imamlu were up in arms and that there would be a furious fight. And now, not only the inhabitants of the two fighting wards, but those of the other wards closed their shops to watch the show, if not actually take part in it. This was an old custom of the inhabitants of Shamakh.

Standing there at the corner of the main street, Hadji Alyakbar was cheering his young warriors among whom was Fatma's brother Hashim. First of all, the youths closed in, having taken off their *Choukhas*—thick woolen jackets—and using them as shields. Before long the seniors had joined in and the fight was on. The central part of the city was filled with a milling crowd, including the Christians who, standing on rooftops, were watching the spectacle of two factions of kindred religion doing their best to spill one another's blood. The fight was

taking place on the main street, right in the heart of the city. Thousands of rocks were being hurled from both sides at each other. All were armed with long sticks, but the hand-to-hand fight had not begun yet because the belligerents had not yet closed in. The rattle of shattered windows, the thumping of foot steps, the screams of women and children, and the wild cries of the children had rendered the scene a veritable bedlam.

A few of the policemen tried to interfere in an effort to separate the fighters but after a few whacks of the stick they were wiser men and cautiously retreated into the ranks of the spectators. Equally impotent were the counsels and the threats of the old men. Bird-hunter Askia already had disarmed two with his unerring sling shots. Roast-vendor Heyrat was roaring at the top of his voice, whacking the ground with his stick, and holding aloft his *Choukha*-shield and scampering all over the field.

Suddenly Imamlu was rocked, cap maker Meyti, pulling his Shiraz cap over his eyes, dashed forward through a hail of stones. He was followed by Heyrat and Fatma's brother Hashim. The challenge was taken up by Mahmoud of Sari Topragh, the man who had been slapped by Meyti. The ranks closed in and the hand-to-hand fight was on. A *Choukha* of red lining was whirling in the air attracting the attention of all. The wearer was roaring like a lion and his voice was being heard far away. Imamlu rushed to the attack hurling Sari Topragh back reeling on its hind legs. A few of the wounded fell to the ground. The women began to shriek all the louder, the mothers were crying, and the fathers were cursing their vain children. It was a veritable typhoon.

And what was all this about? It was over one girl. But where was she? What was she doing at this dreadful moment?

On top of Ahmed Agha's public bath house a group of women were watching the fight from their huddled position behind the

domes. Foremost among these, at the very edge of the roof, was Fatma herself, standing there fearless and bold. Ah, how fortunate that the mothers did not know she was the real cause of the fight, otherwise they would have torn her to pieces for having put their sons to all that trouble. In vain they tried to hold back Fatma. And of truth who could have held her back when her whole soul and mind was rooted on one point, the red *choukha*?

Presently every one fled and the field was left to the red *choukha*. The Imamlu gang rushed at him led by Heybat, Meyti, and Hashim. Would the youth with the red *choukha* run away or would he stand his ground? Would he be able to stand that shock? Would Hashim return alive from that fight? Why did Fatma's brother join the fight? If it were not for him all the Imamlu-ites would have been massacred by the youth with the red *choukha*.

While beautiful Fatma was being tormented by these thoughts, the fight was getting hotter and hotter. Having received reinforcements, the Sari Topragh gang were surging forward in hundreds. Heybat, Meyti, and Hashim finally surrounded the youth with the red *choukha*. Fatma let out an involuntary scream, the moment was dangerous. She was seeing how her brother Hashim was showering his blows of the stick on the head of the youth with the red *choukha*. She was witnessing the blows of Heybat and Meyti on her hero. But she noticed that the red *choukha* paid no attention to Hashim's blows but only retaliated to the blows of the other two champions. Clearly he was sparing Hashim. Fatma's heart fluttered. Only Asad could exercise such magnanimity, no one else.

Meyti's stick fell to the ground and he himself lay sprawled at Asad's feet. The same thing happened to Haybat. Bravo for the red *choukha*! At that moment a red streak started from Asad's forehead, and

trickling down covered his face and chest. Bird hunter Askia's sling had hit its mark. Fatma's legs began to weaken. But presently Asad, after a moment's wavering, took out a white object from his pocket, bandaged his bloody face, and roaring like a lion, dashed forward with all the more ferocity.

The Imamlu gang ran away. Instinctively Fatma looked behind her and saw that the women had deserted the place. She listened attentively and felt that the gang of Sari Topragh were getting closer and closer. Suddenly he disappeared. Fatma had a blackout. Could it be they had killed him? She yelled for help and sat down on the roof top.

A few men dragged a ladder and hoisted it against the wall of the bath house. Fatma saw that the servants of Hadji Alyakbar were climbing up the ladder. They already were at the top rung and were begging Fatma to come down, but at that moment the ladder underneath them was yanked out and fell to the ground with a heavy crash, carrying along with it the servants of Hadji Alyakbar. Just then Fatma felt two hands seize her from behind. Like a trapped bird, she let out a scream in an effort to rid herself of that iron grip but her powers failed her and, thoroughly exhausted, she surrendered to the power of the unknown hands.

V

If not the police or the elders of the town, at least nature was able to interrupt the fight. The evening dusk extinguished the fury of the fiery youths. Slowly the crowd of spectators who had not taken part in the fight scattered and the fighters, now weary and mauled, withdrew from the scene. The gang of Sari Topragh were the victors but the gang of Imamlu took comfort in the news that silversmith Asad had disappeared from the fight. Twenty-five had been wounded from both sides, and the condition of three was critical. Assembled in groups in the

corners of the streets the young braves were recounting the details of the fight. They made Hadji Alyakbar believe that silversmith Asad had been killed or at least wounded. Hadji ordered refreshments for the braves.

While they were drinking the refreshments, suddenly there was heard the sound of a heart-rending scream from the house of Molla Ghani as a woman, barefooted, and tearing off her hair, ran into the street. She was Fatma's mother.

"Men, my daughter is gone, men, they have abducted my daughter!" poor Zeinab was shrieking, mourning the loss of her beautiful daughter. It was plain now why Asad had disappeared from the scene of the fight. Who else could have abducted Fatma if not he?

The gang of Imamlu were discomfited. They did not know how to hide their heads from shame and chagrin. Instantly some twenty volunteers from the young braves offered to find Fatma and bring her home at all cost, but to do this they first had to have access to Sari Topragh. A few of the elders of the ward went over to the elders of the enemy and concluded a temporary truce to enable the antagonists to visit each other's wards unhampered.

The wars of great powers have their rules, so did the natives of Shamakh—unwritten to be sure, but respected and preserved traditionally by their ancestors. Hostility among them was expressed by deeds, only on the battle field; in times of peace or truce the antagonists respected one another at least outwardly.

But the search party did not find Fatma at Asad's home, nor did they find Asad himself. Where were they? Those who knew would not tell, those who did not know were glad hearing the heroism of their ringleader. The honor of Imamlu demanded that they locate Fatma that very night no matter what. "He who is with me let him follow me," shouted Hashim pale with fury. He ran to

his house, saddled his horse, tucked his revolver and dagger in his belt and came out. Of the twenty volunteers only fourteen followed him.

"You too follow him," commanded Hadji to his two Arab servants.

The two negroes scampered to their home, picked up their clubs with ballshaped knuckled tips, and joined the party of volunteers. The company was divided into two parts, one led by Hashim, the other by gambler Hassan. The latter was familiar with all the dives of the city, having gambled with all the scoundrels for twenty years. Everything was ready now. Gambler Hassan led his company to the lower part of the city while Hashim headed for the opposite direction. Hashim was convinced Asad had taken Fatma in the direction of the cemetery or the mulberry orchards.

There was a dull stir in the ward of Imamlu all night. Many stayed up in the streets, in front of their homes, to see what would come out of the expedition. Sleepless was also Alyakbar and his sleeplessness had only one cause—his honor and name had been insulted, he had become the target of the discontent and the dull murmurs of the whole ward. The cat was out of the bag now, they all knew that he was the instigator of this whole mess.

"Curses upon you, evil Satayel, curses upon you, evil Satayel. *La ilaha illallah, Mohammed el-resul-ullah*," Hadji Alyakbar repeated incessantly, pacing the porch of his house.

Hadji's older wife Gulnazar, after having obtained her husband's permission, had gone over to her parents' house to spend the night. She could not very well remain under the same roof with the man who, not satisfied with two wives, wanted to bring home a third one under such scandalous circumstances. After midnight the news spread around that Fatma had been located and brought home. Those who were up awakened the sleeping

and all came out in the direction of Molla Ghani's home. But it proved to be a false rumour. It was gambler Hassan who had returned with his party and was telling that he had searched every nook and corner of the lower part of the town but had found no trace of either Fatma or Asad. Hashim's party had not yet returned. His mother fell at Hassan's feet and begged him to hasten to the aid of her son. A few of the young braves being very tired went home to sleep, but they were replaced by other volunteers and Hassan, reinforced now by twice his former numbers, headed for the upper part of the city.

VI

For a long time Asad had been pondering the matter of abducting Fatma if all other peaceful means failed. The unexpected fight shattered his last hopes and now he knew that, after the fight, it would be impossible for Fatma's mother and brother, and especially Alyakbar, to make any concessions. He had to resort to extreme means. The minute the fight was begun, Asad saddled his steed and picked up his double-barreled carbine and his famous dagger made by Teymour of Daghistan. All this he turned over to the fool Biandal, and giving him a piece of coin, he ordered him to follow his movements in the fight from a distance.

"If anyone asks you questions, say nothing. Do you understand?" he said to the fool Biandal who, as a matter of fact, was incapable of giving any answers.

He confided his audacious plan to his closest friends and asked them to help him in his venture.

"We will give our lives gladly," reassured his friends, praising his heroism.

"During the fight you will watch the rooftops and point out Fatma to me," he ordered his friends, "the rest is my job. Do you know her? Have you seen her when she used to call at her sister's house? She will surely be outside during the fight."

After this agreement, Asad flew to the scene of the fight. He was the first to see Fatma. The minute the Sari Topragh gang attacked, the minute Meyti and Heybat were victorious, having deemed the fight over, he rushed to the rear of Ahmet Agha's bath house and climbed to the roof. He pushed over the bath-keeper on his path and made a dash. We know the rest.

It was already dark when Asad, with his precious loot mounted on his horse, arrived at the vineyard of Hadji Baghish of Sari Topragh. The keeper of the vineyard Kiayclahi Abdullah was a tested and tried old man who had seen many a good and evil day. He knew Asad and every time he saw him he recalled his father with whom he had spent a stormy youth.

"What's the matter, my boy?" he asked amazed, seeing Asad's bloody face, his bandaged head, and the faint girl in his lap. Asad told him the story briefly and the old brave asked him to take the girl inside the hut and hide there. By the time the keeper brought some water, Fatma had already come to. She opened her eyes and gave out a deep sigh.

"It is I, Fatma, don't be afraid," Asad reassured her tenderly, as much as his hoarse voice would permit. Terrified, Fatma sprang to her feet, pale, her hair dishevelled, and clamping her hands on her head she wailed: "Woe to my mother, woe to my brother!"

She ran outside but Asad intercepted her, seizing her hands. "Do not torture yourself for nothing," he comforted her, "your mother, your brother, and your sisters all are alive."

"Why have you brought me here?" she demanded indignantly.

Why? Did not Fatma know why? Did she think Asad would let her become the wife of another man?

Fatma slowly quieted down and would not speak. As a matter of fact her desperate cries were half artificial. At heart she was

glad over what had happened; her imagination had long since cooked up such a heroic act on the part of Asad and she wanted to see her imagination come to fruition. Only the presence of the old vineyard keeper had made her raise a little rumpus so that the venerable Kiayblahi should not think the young Mussulman girl was totally devoid of modesty.

The old keeper rustled up a little repast for the two—bread, cheese, cucumbers and greens. Fatma and Asad had been hungry all day so that the old keeper's modest luncheon tasted more palatable to them than the rice pudding which is served on the occasion of *Orouch Bayram*. The small hut was illuminated by the dim light of an ancient lamp. The old keeper was trying to entertain his guests by relating episodes from his life similar to the day's happenings. Asad was pale. The wound on his head was very painful but he was trying to control himself, although with great difficulty.

"Why are your lips trembling, son?" asked the old keeper, "is your wound bothering you? I see blood is dripping from under the bandage. I must bring some medicine to stop the flow."

Saying it, the old man at once tore off a piece of the lining of his ancient *Arkhalough*, lit it with the flame of the candle, and dropped it on the floor. When the piece was completely burnt down, he picked up the black soot, and applying it on the wound, bandaged the forehead. The medicine cut the flow of the blood like a knife. During the operation Fatma was assisting the old man, constantly circling around the wounded youth.

"Now go to sleep," the old man said with paternal tenderness. "As to the future we will think about it tomorrow. 'The evil of tomorrow is better than the good of the evening' says our ancestral proverb."

It was a tranquil night. In the dark blue sky the stars were shining. From time to time, the calls of the night watchmen were

heard in the distance, signaling the hour of the night. Their calls were accompanied by the dogs of Sari Topragh who, their snouts raised against the sky, were yowling at the stars. Impelled by his superstition, the old keeper decided to keep watch over the hut all night. The howling of the dogs sounded ominous to him.

With her clothes on, and wrapped up in Asad's *choukha*, Fatma was sleeping in a corner of the hut. In another corner, in the keeper's bed was lying Asad. One hand leaning against his rifle, the other reposing on his head, he was neither asleep nor awake, but was merged into a sort of stupor. His wound was paining him intensely but he was trying hard not to sigh or groan in order not to awaken Fatma. His head was eddying with the events of the day. He would now fancy himself in the midst of the fight, surrounded right and left by his enemies, under a hail of rocks, and now on the top of the bath house, seizing Fatma, and now riding his horse, his precious loot in his lap, galloping through the astonished crowd.

Then he started to think about the present and the future. What was he to do on the morrow? To hide for long in the keeper's hut was impossible, the Imamlu gang would not stand still of course, they would exert every effort to recover Fatma and avenge the honor of their ward with Asad's blood. He resolved to pick up Fatma in the morning, go to the nearest Turkish village, find a Molla and wed the girl.

Presently he began to tremble all over. His teeth were chattering and he felt cold. The cold was replaced by an intoxicating fever. His mind became chaotic, he started to doze off, or was in a delirium, to be exact. Here was Fatma, barefooted, her head uncovered riding the horse and ordering Asad to do the same. They were galloping far far away into unknown spaces. In a deserted field, a man was coming straight at them. He had a long, snow white beard, holding in his

hand a short black switch, whipping him on the shoulder. In the twinkling of an eyelash, Fatma and Asad were transferred to a magnificent mansion where the wedding was to be held. The guests were being entertained, the musicians were playing their instruments, the dancers were dancing, and the servants were serving refreshments.

Just then a policeman came in, followed by another, and presently all the guests were transformed into Imamlu enemies. They seized Fatma, tied up Asad's feet and hands, they mounted him backwards on a donkey, and smeared his face with soot. They were taking him to Imamlu. The enemies had surrounded him, showering him with rocks, mocking him and spitting on his face. Then came Fatma's brother Hashim and capmaker Meyti who slapped him on the face. Oh, what a terrible disgrace! *Akh*, if only his hands were loose he would give the answer to them all. But lo, here was the policeman, hitting him on the shoulder with his whip, one, two, three. . .

Asad opened his eyes.

VII

Inside the hut it was still dark but from the door it could be seen that the sun was up. As he raised his heavy head, Asad saw before him a strange man.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"Quick, son, get up, they are coming," replied a familiar voice.

Instantly Asad was on his feet, rifle in hand, dashing to the other corner of the room where he saw Fatma was still asleep.

"Who is coming?" he asked.

The old keeper took him by the hand and led him to the door of the hut. In the dim light of the morning, way off, almost at the other end of the vineyard, Asad saw what looked to him like a company of men, muttering menacingly. They came closer and closer and their voices could be heard distinctly now. Presently their faces were clearly etched behind the trees. One part

were mounted, the other on foot; all were Turks, inhabitants of Imamlu. The foremost among them was hurrying on foot. Asad recognized him. It was Hashim.

In a flash he was inside, picked up his weapons, and leaving Fatma alone, he stepped out of the hut, locked the door, and leaning against the wall, he waited for the newcomers. To run away and to carry Fatma away was unthinkable; the enemy was quite close. He had to defend himself. But how could he defend himself against so many? There were fifteen of them, whereas he had only the old man whose only weapon was a fifty year old rusty dagger. But no matter, let them come, no one could take Fatma away from Asad as long as he was alive.

Finally the gang of Imamlu came out from their hiding place behind the trees and stood in front of the hut, forming a semicircle. Hashim swiftly drew the rifle from his shoulder and pointing it at the heart of Asad, shouted, "Stand still." His example was followed by gambler Hassan, red Heytar, black Bazir, blind Mitallim and a few others. Asad was faced with more than ten black barrels whose dark death-dealing holes were staring at him like the eyes of the demons driven from Tartarus.

The old keeper rushed to the fore and began to expostulate the Imamlus, explaining the matter, inviting them to a reconciliation, and at the same time pointing out that it was unsportsmanlike to attack one man with twenty. But one of the bystanders hit him on the head with a rock and told him to mind his own business.

"Be off with you, *Kiaftar* dog," shouted cross-eyed Nourullah, "otherwise I will send your soul to perdition."

The old man stepped back, rueing the fact that he did not have a gun in his hand or else he would have shown these impertinent brats what it means to cross swords with Kiayblahi Abdullah.

Hashim was demanding that Asad bring

Fatma out of the hut and deliver her to him. At first Asad tried to appeal to his intellect, his heart, and his Mussulman feelings. He reminded him of the unity of religion and the messages of the Koran which forbid an orthodox shedding the blood of another orthodox Mussulman. But Hashim would hear nothing of it. He only demanded that Asad return his sister.

"And if I don't," shouted Asad in final desperation.

"I will go and recover her over your dead body," replied Hashim decisively. As he said it, the gun in his hand trembled.

The keeper was exhorting Asad to spare his young life and willingly turn Fatma over to her brother but Asad would not listen. His forehead bandaged, his face clotted with blood, his chest half open, one hand holding his gun and the other resting on his side, his waist pressing against the door, he was standing where he was, as if waiting for the decisive moment. His eyes were blood-shot, his head heavy, and his feet and hands trembling from the fever.

"Unconscionable creature, spare thyself, spare your youth," shouted one of the Imamlus who, grudgingly admiring the manly stature of this handsome native of Sari Topragh, could no longer restrain his inner voice.

"What is there about him to be regretted as all that? Come now, fill the dog's mouth with the smoke," broke in a thick throaty voice.

Suddenly the gun of nine-fingered Seyfullah fired. Like the autumn wind which blows through the cracks of the door, the bullet whizzed over Asad's head and lodged in the trunk of one of the mulberry trees behind the hut. The Imamluan wanted to intimidate the obstinate youth of Sari Topragh, but to no avail. Asad was prepared to defend himself to his last breath.

VIII

The sound of the gun awakened Fatma. The doors were burst open and the young

girl rushed out, her thick long hair strewn wildly on her shoulders, tearing her breasts with her fingernails, and screaming like a wild animal. In a flash she was standing in front of Asad, facing the Imamlu gang.

"Be careful," Hashim warned his companions, lowering his gun.

"May you all go to perdition, may you all go to perdition," Fatma was shouting, having forgotten her customary bashfulness.

"Step aside," Hashim shouted to his sister, as he stepped forward to take hold of her. But Fatma stuck closer to Asad intending to defend him. She stood in front of Asad and said to her brother, "Don't you dare come near, don't you dare. I will not let you harm a hair of his head. He is innocent. I myself eloped with him, yes, I myself of my own free will. Don't you dare come close, Hashim, I will not let you, I will not let you."

It was a heart-moving scene. An invincible barrier stood between the two enemies without removing which no battle was possible. Hashim never dreamed that Fatma would defend her abductor with such determination. He had believed that his sister had been forced into this by Asad, that she was an impotent victim to save whom it was necessary to shed blood. Seeing Fatma's obstinacy and her desperate defense, he was astounded. For a moment the passion for revenge in him gave way to an involuntary feeling of compunction. Only a moment before he was ready to fire the death-dealing bullet at the very heart of this daring abductor, and now, his face turned aside, he was wavering, looking into the faces of his companions.

He himself, considered the wronged party, now forgave the guilty; whereas the guilty was so magnanimous and so fearless that he was ready to defend the girl he had abducted with his very life. Would it not be an act of cowardice to raise hands against such a youth right before his beloved's eyes? That

was the expression of Hashim's face. And the natives of Shirvan who understood the language of silent looks, surmising what was going on in Hashim's mind, began to look at each other.

Cross-eyed Nourullah was the first to venture to break the silence. He drove his horse and shouted in a ringing voice, "Hashim, don't forget your honor."

A muffled rumble broke loose from the throats of all the Imamlu's. They were disturbed over the leniency of Hashim. How could they forgive an audacious enemy, a man who had insulted the honor of all the Imamlu's by abducting one of the most beautiful girls of their ward? What would the other Imamlu's say? What would the residents of the other wards say? No, no, there could be no reconciliation. Was this why they had fought in the streets the day before? Was this why twenty braves had been wondering around the city all night? No, the enemy should be punished, they should be revenged, the honor of Imamlu could not be vindicated without blood.

"Blood, blood," shouted all the semi-savages in unison.

Hashim took in the temper of that mad crowd. He felt that if he forgave Asad, the others would not forgive, and perhaps they would not forgive him. But how could he remove Fatma from Asad's side who was

clinging to him as if she were a part of him? Every bullet aimed at the enemy might find her as the first target.

While he was vacillating between these thoughts three of the Imamlus broke off from the crowd, and hiding behind the mulberry trees, circled around and approached Asad from behind. Noticing them, the old keeper drew his rusty dagger and stood behind Asad, determined to defend him with his life. On the other hand Asad was trying to remove Fatma from the scene unharmed so he could fight his enemies unhampered. There was a fight between the old keeper and the three Imamlus. Instantly Asad about faced and fired. There was heard an Arabic exclamation and one of Hadji Alyakbar's negroes, holding on to his knee, collapsed on the ground. Asad fired again but in vain.

At the same moment he felt an intense chill on his waist which penetrated inside. He trembled all over, let out an involuntary roar, and collapsed at Fatma's feet.

"Allah, Allah," he cried out feebly, and the pupils of his eyes, making strange circles, fixed on Fatma. This was all the poor girl could hear or see, Asad said nothing more nor moved.

When the Imamlu with wild shouts rushed forward to see the result of their revenge, when Hashim approached to lift his sister, Fatma had fallen on Asad's body, weeping bitterly.

ABOUT SHIRVANZADE

Shirvanzade (Alexander Movsesian), foremost Armenian novelist and playwright of the 19th century, was born in 1858 in the town of Shamakhi, Caucasus. After receiving his primary training in the town schools, he was graduated from the state provincial school at the age of 15. In 1875 he moved to Baku where at first he served as secretary in the provincial court, and later, as librarian of the Armenian Humanitarian Association, he became interested in books and literature. Beginning with 1878 he became a correspondent of the Russian newspapers in Baku and Tiflis, and the Armenian periodical *Meghou* (Bee). In 1880, his story "Fire in the Oil Factory," published in *Mushak* (The Tiller) brought the author to the attention of the public. Having moved to Tiflis in 1883, he devoted his entire time strictly to literature, and for a period of time served as secretary of the newspaper "Artsakank" (Echo). In 1885 he published his first great novel "Namous" (Honor) which to this day is played by Armenian dramatic companies. Other works of his are: "Arsen Dimaksian" (1892), "Chaos" (1898), followed by a large number of great or small novels and plays, foremost among which is "For Honor," likewise a very popular play to this day. Most of Shirvanzade's writings deal with the Armenian bourgeoisie class and the working conditions in the oil wells of Caucasus. The 30th anniversary of his literary activity was observed in 1911. He died 1935, in Soviet Armenia.

THE AMERICAN MILITARY MISSION TO ARMENIA

Part V

By JAMES H. TASHJIAN

The Mission Reaches Sivas

On the morning of the 20th of September, 1919, a group of Americans, found on United States governmental duty in the middle of a strange land, opened their eyes on the moment of the crisp coolness of a late Anatolian summer morning. These men in khaki—all members of the American Military Mission to Armenia—just thirteen days previously had left the comparative luxury of life in Constantinople, and had struck out into Asia Minor. Finally leaving their rail cars at Mardin, and after a trip in which they had seen for themselves the shambles of post-war Turkey, and had noted the unerasable marks of the late Armenian massacres, they had taken to their gasoline vehicles and had hit northward on the second major leg of their tour of inspection. The goal of the journey north was the growingly important city of Sivas where the newly formed but menacing Turkish National Movement, led by Mustafa Kemal Pasha, had established itself and had spread its roots and tentacles over what remained of the Turkish Empire. Thus, Sivas, which would be soon visited by these Americans, had become the rival and enemy of Constantinople — Istanbul — the traditional seat of the Turkish government; and the aims and aspirations of the men of Sivas were still cloaked in mystery and fable, though the affection held for them by the Turks had been encountered wherever the American caravan had passed.

The Mission had camped in their vehicles over night, a hungry and miserable military

unit which had outstripped its supply train. Difficulties met with in the procurement of gasoline and oil had slowed up the Mission considerably; and the supply vans had been unable to keep up with the lighter and swifter personnel wagons. On the evening of the 19th, the Mission, upon stopping to camp near Chougnol, between Malatia and Sivas, found that it was without bed, bread and the other few soldier creature comforts.

And the coming of a new day did not alleviate their plight. The supply train had still not reached the main body; and if it were not for the ingenuity of some member of the mission, who rustled up a quantity of Turkish provincial bread and *maxoun* (183), the mission would have been forced to hit for Sivas hungry. As it was, the start, undelayed by the usual procedure of breaking up camp, was accomplished at an early moment; and at 1:00 P.M., the Mission, after chugging along on the rocky road to Sivas, reached that city, where it was received by all the leaders of the Turkish National Movement with the exception of Kemal himself. Khachadoorian thus describes the contact:

"Just outside the city, we were met by this group of Turks at a spot very close to the old Roman bridge which spans the Kizil Irmak (184). What was obviously the elite of the Turkish soldiery in the city, both mounted and afoot, were drawn up before

(183) Or 'yoghurt,' fermented milk, of high nutritional value.

(184) The ancient Halys. It rises in the Karabel Mts., flows southwesterly and then northeasterly, to empty into the Black Sea, west of the city of Samsoun.

elegantly becarpeted tents. Politeness was the order of the day; yet, we somehow felt that there was something missing, when compared to the receptions we had received elsewhere.

"Raouf Bey (185), former Turkish Minister of the Navy, seemed to be the chief of the reception committee. His haughty bearing and stuttering English stood out sharply. This man spoke as if the Turks had won the war, and he was laying down conditions to a defeated enemy. 'The division of Turkish territory is an impossibility,' he assured us. 'If anyone should attempt that, he must declare war on us, and must fight us until the last Turk is killed.'

"Raouf sounded off against the French and English; and though he admitted that Turkey needed foreign aid, he preferred America, seeing in American aid the independence of his country, the opening of its mines, the continued development of Turkey, of its roads, its railways, etc., etc. But the Bey stressed that that foreign government must not interfere in Turkey's foreign and internal affairs."

The last statement, of course, may be construed to have been a word of wisdom for Mission consumption since its job of recommending for or against an American mandate of areas Turkey considered its own would have been in relation to Turkish affairs which Turkey considered its own private concern.

When the American Military Mission to Armenia entered the city of Sivas, the plenary meeting of the National Movement had been terminated just two days previously.

(185) A Circassian by birth, Raouf Bey commanded the Turkish cruiser "Hamidieh" during World War I. He was an early friend and confederate of Kemal Pasha, and was one of the founders of the "Nationalist" movement. In 1924, however, Raouf Bey was one of the anti-Kemal bloc. He is currently in disfavor.—On quote, see Khachadoorian "Amer. Mil. Mission to Armenia" (in Armenian), Hairenik Monthly, December 1940, p. 74.

The meeting had drawn up a list of things to be done, and had delegated the power to activate the program settled upon to a special working committee. It had moreover been a plenary meeting in almost the fullest sense, with all but the State of Bursa having participated in the deliberations. Raouf Bey himself, along with the former Turkish Ambassador to the United States, Roustem Bey (186), had fled from Istanbul with false papers to take part in the sessions at Sivas. And one of the more important decisions of the congress was the breaking off of relations with the Istanbul government, although each and every one of the delegates had sworn allegiance to the Sultan. It was no wonder, then, that the Americans, upon entering Sivas at the moment, were enveloped by an atmosphere fraught with arrogance and defiance, an atmosphere raised by the self-styled leaders of a people rebuked by the free-forces of the world.

The Americans found the American Relief Mission in this city to be in excellent condition. With Dr. Partridge, they visited the local orphanage and work shop where they found 1500 male and female waifs being taken care of, with 3,500 other Armenians being aided by American facilities. Dr. Partridge told the Mission that of the 10,000 Armenians presently in Sivas, scarcely a few hundred were native Sivasians, the rest having come to the city from elsewhere.

"It was especially a great experience to me to become acquainted with Miss Graffam," Khachadoorian wrote. "One of the American missionaries in the city, this kind lady felt the Armenian sufferings as much as any Armenian. She was an Armenianized

(186) Ahmed Roustem Bey was born Alfred Roustem, and was a renegade Pole. He was expelled from the U. S. by order of Pres. Wilson (Autumn, 1915) after having denied the fact of the Armenian massacres. Following return to Turkey, he published a book in French giving false information on Turco-Armenian affairs. He served Kemal as a diplomat and publicist.

American woman." (187)

On the noon of the day Sivas had been achieved, the Mission paid a visit to the Vali, Rishid Pasha (188) at the governmental building where the Americans "were forced to sit down at a sumptuous dinner arranged in our honor although just two hours before we had partaken of a good American meal at the Relief center." Khachadoorian gives no details of what went on at this repast, possibly sparing the reader the boring details of added Turkish complaints as to the nature of things.

An Interview with Kemal Pasha

Following the termination of the dinner in Sivas, General Harbord had a long interview with the National Movement's leader, Kemal Pasha, at which were present also American Generals McCoy and Moseley, and the Turkish Beys, Roustem, Raouf and Bekir Sami. (189)

Kemal, says Khachadoorian, gave the impression that he was a brave, patriotic and able soldier who desired to keep Turkey for the Turks. The interior provinces of Turkey had already accepted him and were with him, with the exception of the Kurdish mutasarif of Malatia who, curiously enough, "died a few days after our interview under suspicious circumstances." (190)

Kemal expressed "regrets" for the Armenian massacres; but he refused to admit the responsibility of the Turkish nation for the immolations that had laid low a million and one-half defenseless people. He pinned the responsibility for the murders on "a few individuals" and quickly veered away to other

matters, finding "the unmerciful Greek ferocity" in the Smyrna area to be "unpardonable," especially since Allied representatives were in that area.

If the Greeks had not been so "ferocious" against the Mohammedans; and if the Peace Conference had not dragged around the Near Eastern Questions, no Turkish nationalistic movement would have been forthcoming, Kemal told the Americans. The Turks, he said, knew they were bound to accept involuntarily the verdict of the Peace Conference, even though such was not a pleasant thing to them; but, he went on, the Greek "barbarities" had touched the Turkish pride; and with the dragged out deliberations of the Peace Conference, Turkish forces were organized and concentrated "so that Turkey might emerge the victor."

Having expressed himself in that vein, Kemal handed General Harbord a Memorandum comprehending his views and those of his "National Movement." The full text of this Memorandum, written over Kemal's personal signature, follows in its 'condensed form': (191)

CONDENSED MEMORANDUM CONCERNING THE ORGANIZATION AND POINTS OF VIEW OF THE LEAGUE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE RIGHTS OF ANATOLIA AND ROUMELIA.

1. Our league was not in existence when the Sublime Porte signed the Armistice of September 30, 1919.

After the conclusion of this convention on the basis of the principle of nationalities as formulated by Pres. Wilson, our nation firmly entertained the hope that it could obtain a just peace and was eagerly looking

(191) The "Memorandum" is here repeated exactly as carried in the "Khachadoorian Papers." It is a part of Senate Document #266, the official report of the Mission. For the sake of preserving the integrity of this historical document we have left the English untouched.

(187) Khachadoorian, op. cit. p. 75.

(188) Governor of Sivas, 1919-1920.

(189) Bekir Sami, Governor of Syria before World War I, and an associate of Kemal. He served in Kemal's cabinet as Minister of Foreign Affairs. In 1921, he went to London to negotiate for the release of Turkish war criminals. He also had conversations with the French and made concessions. Upon return to Turkey, he found himself in disfavor. Bekir Sami, like Raouf Bey, was a Circassian.

(190) Khachadoorian, op. cit. p. 75.

forward to such a consummation. As a matter of fact, the carrying out of the armistice gave arbitrary rise on the part of the Entente Powers to daily increasing transgressions and violations of its clauses.

Constantinople, the seat of the caliphate and throne, was occupied by the forces of the Entente Powers in a brutal and oppressive form. (192) The police and the gendarmerie having been placed under the control of the occupying powers. This constituted a de facto interference with the administration of the capital and the independence of the country.

The regions of Adana and Adalia were occupied right up to Konia. The cession of Smyrna and the surrounding territory as well as of Thrace to Greece and the creation of an extensive Armenian State in eastern Anatolia on the one hand, and of a Republic of Pontus along the Black Sea shore of the Empire on the other hand, began to be seriously discussed.

It was natural, under these circumstances, that the Turkish nation should feel deeply affected by these operations directed against the integrity of its territory and independence as well as against its dignity and other legitimate rights.

On the other hand, the Chamber of Deputies, in session at Constantinople, having been dissolved the cabinets which came to power in succession and were composed of incapable individuals did not derive their authority from the national forces and escaped the control of the representatives of the nation. Presently it was realized that these cabinets were not only lacking in the necessary qualities for defending the rights and dignity of the nation, but that they actually lent themselves to the satisfaction of the ambitions of the foreign powers, principally

England, in whose hands they had become simple toys. (193)

Thus it came to pass that the nation which began to feel seriously concerned about its existence, felt the necessity of manifesting directly its power and administrative action by it personal intervention.

As a consequence, national organizations sprang spontaneously in every part of the country.

Of these national organizations the following are the principal: The Erzeroum Association for the Defense of the Fatherland; the Diarbekir Association for the Defense of the Fatherland; The Cilicia Association for the Defense of National Rights; The Smyrna Association for the Defense of National Rights (this association latterly assumed the name of "Association for Defending the National Rights and Preventing Cession of Territory"); The Thrace and Pasha Eli Association (this association having combined with the associations of Western Thrace adopted the general denomination of "Association of Thrace"). A number of associations were also formed in Constantinople, of which the National Unity Association is the principal.

II. It was while these associations formed throughout the country were busy extending their organization in a perfectly orderly and peaceful manner (194)—they were looking forward with confidence to the assertion of the principles of right and justice—that the Greeks occupied Smyrna and the environing country under the patronage of the Entente Powers and committed on this occasion untold atrocities. The Greek troops and the

(193) Post World War I Turkish Nationalist leaders on few occasions admitted openly or even tacitly that, as a defeated nation, Turkey must bear the consequences of defeat. The paragraph is an excellent example of the Turkish "line."

(194) We have seen how these associations extended "their organization in a perfectly orderly and peaceful manner." There was more than adequate reason for the minorities to fear the Turkish "Nationalist" group.

(192) There is no evidence that the occupation of Constantinople by the Entente ever assumed a "brutal and oppressive form" in the sense of that description.

local Greeks who had joined them in arms started a general massacre of the Mussulman population in which the officials and Ottoman officers and soldiers as well as the peaceful inhabitants were indiscriminately put to death and subjected to forms of torture and savagery worthy of the Inquisition and constituting in any case a barbarous violation of the laws of humanity.

Nationally the outcry was great among the Mussulman population. It appealed for help. The voice thus raised by the innocent and tormented Mussulmans of Smyrna reverberated throughout the land. The whole nation rose as one man to oppose the barbarously hostile action of the Greeks. Meetings were organized in the towns and even in the villages and telegrams dispatched by the hundreds to the Entente Powers and the whole civilized world, tearfully appealing for protection and help. These solicitations of a whole people for a reversion to the laws of humanity and justice remained unheard. On the contrary the Greeks extended the zone of their operations to the continued accompaniment of their first atrocities. In Constantinople the oppressive measures of the English acting in conjunction with the Central Government took a severer form. The Italian forces in Adalia were increased. In Cilicia the Mussulman population continued to be subjected to insult and outrage and reenforced measures were adopted for the suppression of Turkish authority. The Greek bands whose activity was directed from Constantinople and Smyrna indulged in increased outrages at the expense of the Mussulmen element.

At this juncture the Ferid Pasha cabinet, (195) which in no wise represents the feelings and wishes of the nation, was invited to send a delegation to Paris. The treatment with which our delegates met at the congress

was only another instance added to so many others of the offensive attitude so easily adopted toward Turkey. (196)

III. The nation now realized that salvation resided in the formation of a general and joint organization acting in perfect unity. The population of Trebizond and Erzeroum took steps in June, 1919, in view of the convocation of a congress in the latter town which was to bring about the unification of the eastern vilayets. At the same time a resolution was adopted at Amassia (197) for the meeting of a congress at Sivas for the unification of the whole of Anatolia and Roumelia. (198)

On the 23rd of July, 1919, the first of the intended congresses met at Erzeroum. It was composed of the elected representatives of all the vilayets, subprefectures, and cazas (199) of eastern Anatolia. It remained in session 15 days. (The proclamation embodying its essential resolutions, system of organization, aims, and points of view is in principle the same as that of the congress that followed at Sivas and is annexed in the Turkish original to this memorandum.)

On the fourth of September, 1919, the second Congress met at Sivas. It was composed of the elected representatives of western Anatolia and Roumelia and, acting in the name of eastern Anatolia, a body of fully empowered delegates elected by the Congress of Erzeroum. The latter Congress having already established the principal basis of action of the national movement, the Sivas Congress completed its deliberations and

(196) This is a curious paragraph. In the opening lines, Kemal rejects the Ferid Pasha cabinet as not representing "the feelings and wishes of the nation." Turkish delegates at the Peace Conference represented the Ferid cabinet. No "Nationalist" delegates were in Paris; yet, later, Kemal bemoans that "our delegates" (the Ferid men) met with "offensive" treatment!

(197) South of Samsoun on the railroad leading north from Sivas. It was the birthplace of Strabo.

(198) A district of Bulgaria, formerly part of the Ottoman Empire.

(199) A Turkish sub-district.

(195) Ferid Pasha, Prime Minister at Constantinople, and an anti-Kemalist. Turkey signed the Sevres Treaty during his regime.

adopted its resolutions in the course of a week.

At this general Congress it was once more established that all those parts of the Empire which were under Turkish authority at the time of the conclusion of the armistice between the Sublime Porte and the Entente Powers formed one joint block of territory and that our compatriots of the same faith formed a united body pursuing one aim in perfect unison. This Congress took the name of "League for the Defense of the Rights of Anatolia and Roumelia." In this fashion the whole nation and the Ottoman Army which is recruited from among the sons of the nation and whose primary duty is the defense of the Fatherland form the sources of our strength.

A "committee of representatives" was elected with powers to pursue the common end and to administer the affairs of the organization.

IV. As shown in the annexed regulations, the foremost object of our league is, on the one hand, to constitute the national forces into a factor for the maintenance of the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Fatherland within the borders already mentioned and for the defense of the national independence and the rights of the caliphate and throne and, on the other hand, to establish the supremacy of the national will.

Concerning our non-Moslem compatriots with whom we have lived together for such a long time (Armenians, Greeks, Jews, etc.) we have no other point of view or feeling than to be sincerely animated with the best intentions toward them and to consider them entitled to perfect equality with ourselves. We are absolutely certain that if the country is freed from the evil influences and suggestions which have been at work in its midst so far, the different races of the Empire will live in peace with one another and lead, in

common, a happy and prosperous life. (200)

The high and pure aims which are ours exclude all aggressive intentions against the Entente Powers. (201) It will be natural and inevitable for us, however, to defend ourselves and retaliate in answer to the attacks in a material form upon our existence in violation of the laws of justice and humanity.

V. It is to be deplored that whereas the nature of our aims was to be gathered from our explanations as well as from our acts, a number of evil-minded and malevolent individuals, starting a campaign of misrepresentation and false rumors, sought to attribute to our intentions forms which never crossed our minds and had no connection whatever with truth. In this respect, those who went furthest are the English and the Ferid Pasha cabinet which, as already stated, is but a tool in their hands.

Ferid Pasha and his colleagues are convinced that they could not enjoy any authority whatsoever if the administration was run on constitutional and liberal lines and rested on the national forces. That is why, the nation, having given proof of its maturity and shown its general capability as well as its consciousness of its civil and natural rights, the only concern of this cabinet is to crush the national organization and its action. In this campaign one of its weapons is the fear of the unionists, those unionists who gained such unenviable notoriety the world over by their misrule lasting several years to the great detriment of the nation and by their last crime which was to plunge the country into an abyss from which it is experiencing such difficulty in extricating itself. Speculating on this fear the present

(200) Conditions among Armenians remaining in Turkey have disproved this Kemalist "concern" for minorities.

(201) Yet about a year later, Turkey, banded with Soviet Russia, attacked the Independent Republic of Armenia, the "Little Ally" of the Western powers.

cabinet is fatuously seeking to discredit our action which is free from every kind of self-seeking ambition and is pursuing thoroughly national aims by representing these as being connected with unionism. Another weapon to which the cabinet clings is the fear of bolshevism. In the official communications they are striving to get through to the provincial governors, they are not ashamed to assert that the Bolsheviks have entered Anatolia and that all our activities are inspired by them.

As a matter of fact we realize and estimate the painful consequences to which unionism has led the nation much better than Ferid Pasha and his likes. Our object, so far from being to deal the last blow to the existence of our fatherland and nation by launching upon adventures, is to proceed with the greatest discrimination and forethought and to find the means for insuring their survival and welfare. Consequently there can be no relationship between us and the unionists.

As to the Bolsheviks, there is no room whatever in our country for this doctrine, our religion and customs as well as our social organization being entirely unfavorable to its implantation. In Turkey there are neither great capitalists nor millions of artisans and workingmen. On the other hand, we are not saddled with an agrarian question. Finally, from the social point of view, our religious principles are such as to dispense us with the adoption of bolshevism. The best proof that the Turkish nation has no leanings in favor of this doctrine and that, if necessary, it is ready to combat it, is to be found in the attempt of Ferid Pasha to deceive the nation by way of alarming it into the belief that bolshevism has invaded the land or is on the point of doing so. (202) The Ferid Pasha cabinet is truly a coat cut to measure of the expansionist ambitions of

the English. The latter, founding their plans on their experiences in India, Egypt, and the other countries they have succeeded in bringing under their arbitrary rule, realize full well that after reducing the Turkish nation to the condition of a flock deprived of all sense of human dignity and all national and patriotic virtues, as well as of the right of liberty and education, they will be able to degrade it into a troop of slaves bowing to their will. This is the end toward which they are working, having recourse to numberless intrigues in our midst in view of its attainment. To quote a few instances of their tactics:

(a) Falsely accusing quite a number of Ottoman citizens of unionism, opposition to England, and what not, they proceeded to arrest and exile them, thus tampering with the country's judicial rights. Besides this, they are busy discovering or creating reasons for the arrest of the Nationalists and patriots remaining in the country and employ the Government as an instrument for persecuting them.

(b) With the idea of bringing about the partition of the Empire and creating a fratricidal struggle between Turks and Kurds, they incited the latter to join in a plan for the establishment of an independent Kurdistan under English protection, the argument put forward by them being that the Empire was, in any case, condemned to dissolution. For the carrying out of this enterprise they spent large sums of money, had recourse to every form of espionage, and even sent emissaries on the spot. Thus an English officer of the name of Naivill (203) exerted himself in this sense for a long time at Diarbekir, having recourse to every kind of fraud and deception in his operations. But our Kurd

(202) There is a mountain of evidence proving that Kemal's Turkey wooed the friendship of Soviet Russia.

(203) See installment IV of this series (TAR, Winter, 1949, p. 85) where reference is made to this British officer as active among the Kurds of Malatia. His name may have been "Nowell" rather than "Naivill," as here carried.

compatriots, guessing what was on foot, drove him out of the place as well as a handful of traitors who had sold their consciences for money. Disappointed in his action at Diarbekir, Mr. Naivill betook himself to Malatia with several adventurers belonging to the Bedrihan clan whom he had won over with money but who enjoy no credit with their kinsmen such as Kiamouran, Djaladoh, and Diarbekirli, Djemil Pasha Lade Ekrem. (204) There he renewed his attempt in view of the establishment of an independent Kurdistan in collaboration with the mutessarif (subgovernor), Khasil Bey, also a member of the Bedrihan clan.

On the other hand, combining with the Vali of Kharput, Ghalil Bey (205)—an instrument of the self-seeking Minister of the Interior Abil Bey (206) and the likewise self-seeking Minister of War Suleyman Chefik Pasha (207)—who was committed to take measures against the national movement and more especially against the Sivas Congress, he and the crowd of his associates started to cry, "The Armenian soldiers are going to occupy the country—to arms," intending in this manner to provoke a rising of our simple-minded Kurdish compatriots. The object of this wicked plan was threefold: To resuscitate Kurdish particularism, to destroy the national forces, and to create a conflict and the shedding of blood between children of the same country. The conspirators did not even shrink from trying to implicate in the projected tragedy a detachment of troops Ghalil Bey had asked for under pretense of pursuing personally a band of brigands which was said to have ransacked the mail.

(204) Prominent in the Kurdish freedom movement.

(205) The reference is obviously to Ghalil Bey, Governor of Malatia and Kharput. He issued an order for the arrest of Kemal, but was himself incarcerated by him whom he wished to seize.

(206) An anti-Kemalist.

(207) Temporary Minister of War in the Ferid Pasha cabinet.

These individuals met with the confusion which was to be expected of their underestimation of the national forces. The local population which remained innocent of all participation in these intrigues very soon understood their criminal meaning and was proceeding to take the culprits into custody when they fled.

(c) While perfect tranquility was reigning in Eski Shehir, (208) English troops entered the house of the local commandant, Col. Atif Bey, and putting forward the most unlikely calumnies against him, carried him off under the eyes of his soldiers and sent him under escort to Constantinople. In explanation of the emotion and effervescence very naturally caused among the local population by the outrage the English spread reports to the effect that the Bolsheviks and unionists were invading the district and on this pretense adopted special military measures in the locality.

(d) Ferid Pasha publishes, by means of the telegraphic agencies, the report that disturbances are taking place in Anatolia and his accomplices, the English, making out that the Armenians are being made the victims of outrages in Sivas, addresses a minatory note to the Sublime Porte. At the same time an outcry is raised on the invaded ground that a massacre of the Christians is being planned at Marzovan. (209) As a matter of fact, not only has it been ascertained materially that no such things have happened, but that there is absolutely no likelihood of their occurring. On the contrary, the encounters which were taking place in the region of Samsoun before the organiza-

(208) A city about 200 miles to the southeast of Constantinople.

(209) As a matter of fact, an Armenian massacre did occur in Marzovan in Sept. and Oct. of 1919, at the time the American mission was in Asia Minor. The massacre was executed by one Topal Osman, a Turkish guerilla leader, and aide-de-camp of Kemal.

tion of the national movement between the Greek bands formed with a political object and the Mussulmen population against which the former were practicing their ferocity and who, in the absence of all protection on the part of the army and gendarmerie, was forced to act in self-defense, have stopped as a result of the advice given to both sides by the national organization and without recourse having been had to measures of force. Today perfect tranquility reigns in this region as in the other parts of the country.

VI. We entertain no unfriendly dispositions toward the Armenian Republic of which Erivan is the center. For the present the league has no relations with this State and is not interested in it. Our knowledge concerning it is derived from rumors and indirect information. We know, however, so much to be a fact that the Armenians in the new State are carrying on operations in view of exterminating the Mussulman element in obedience to orders from the Armenian corps commander. We have had copies of their orders under our eyes. That the Armenians of Erivan are following a policy of extermination against the Mussulmans and this wave of sanguinary savagery has spread right up to our frontier is also established by the fact of the presence within our borders of numerous Mussulmans fleeing from death on the other side. The government of Erivan has, on the other hand, resorted to direct acts of provocation such as practice of gunfire this side of the border. (210)

Although in the course of these events the English encouraged on the one hand the Armenians in the attitude adopted by them against the Mussulmans or even stirred them

up to it and, on the other hand, enumerating to us the outrages of the former and describing them as unbearable, they urged us to retaliate by attacking the neighboring state. But we, putting up with the Armenian provocations, turned a deaf ear to the indignations of the English, feeling sure that the truth would make itself known soon enough. As a matter of fact we thought we could detect in the attitude of the English trying to launch us upon an attack against Armenia, the plan of creating a situation of which they would avail themselves to dispatch their own troops into that country. All these maneuvers of the English were started by their officers and representatives after they saw themselves obliged to evacuate Caucasia. (211)

We hear that conflicts are taking place between the Azerbaijanese and the Erivan Armenians. We presume that the reason for this is the refusal of the Armenians to join the alliance concluded between the Azerbaijanese and the Georgians against England's protege, Denikin, who is trying to push southward. (212)

It is quite natural that the Mussulmans of Erzeroum and Van, and more particularly those among them living in the border regions should have reached a high state of excitement as a result of the news reaching them daily of the massacres in Armenia and the sight of the unfortunate refugees having escaped death and whose condition is lamentable. What adds to their effervescence is the gunfire practice of the Armenians without our border. But our organization has suc-

(210) Kemal's assurances of "no unfriendly dispositions toward the Armenian" state is best disproved by the combined Turco-Bolshevik attack on that same nation in the following year. There is no evidence of the "provocations" cited by Kemal. He is in error also relative to the "Mussulman . . . extermination" in Armenia; no governmental order was issued for such by the Armenians.

(211) On Armenia's account, there is no evidence, documentary or otherwise, that the English egged the Armenians on against the Mussulman. English pressure on Turkey against the Armenians is highly doubtful.

(212) Reasons for Armenian-Azerbaijan differences were quite different from those advanced by Kemal. Azerbaijan, tied to the skirt of co-religionist Turkey, demanded that the Armenian state cede to them the regions of Armenian populated Zangzur and Karabagh.

ceeded in appeasing them and all likelihood of violent reaction on their part has been exerted.

VII. Refraining from going to the assistance of the unfortunate Mussulman population in Armenia and from collaborating with the Mussulmans of Azerbaijan, (213) we consider it indispensable to confine our action and aims to the task of insuring the future existence and welfare of the Fatherland and Nation, within the borders already defined. We are, in effect, convinced that Turanism is a mischievous conception. (214) We consider that by dispersing our material and moral forces in the pursuit of chimeras a long distance from our frontiers, we will only weaken the strength we require for defending the seat of the throne and caliphate which is the heart of our Fatherland and the knot of our existence.

Quite recent events, unfolding themselves under our very eyes, have taught us to remain faithful to moderate conceptions. For instance, during the general war which has not yet ended in peace, the man at the head of our Government employed the Ottoman forces to attain such ends as the conquest of Caucasia, the strengthening of the Azerbaijan Government and the recovery of Egypt. As a result of this policy the very source of life in our real Fatherland, the population has diminished considerably. Many fertile and otherwise valuable lands have been wrested from us and even within

(213) Though Kemal's Turkey did not "go to the assistance" of the Azerbaijani Mussulmans, it gave that state all support, both military and moral. Turkish soldier prisoners of Russia found their way into the Azerbaijan army, and Turk military missions were active in that locale.

(214) "The mischievous conception"—Turanism—was however one of Kemal's dreams. For instance, with the secret approval of Kemal himself, Turkish war criminals Enver and Jemal Pasha went to Afghanistan, and other centers of Moslem Asia, in an effort to create definite ties between Turkey and those countries. History shows that what Kemal had in mind was first the consolidation and strengthening of Turkey, then the creation of a vast Turanic league.

the frontiers we have assigned to ourselves as our last future, our capital, as well as such peerless sections of our country as Smyrna, Adalia, and Adana are under foreign military occupation. Whereas, if we had not entered the war, or at least, if having entered it, we had wisely employed our forces with a view to defending our territory within its existing borders, instead of wasting them in ambitious enterprises, our situation, though perhaps still that of a vanquished people, would be different from what it is.

In any case the spreading of the preposterous report that Turanism forms part of our aims and action is but another instance of the calumnies in which the English indulge at our expense.

VIII. With a view to distorting the truth, that is the purely national character of our movement, the English have also thrown into circulation reports to the effect that we have obtained money now from the Germans or Bolsheviks, now from the foreign Mussulmans or unionists, now again from Enver Pasha, (215) and we do not know who else. These reports suiting the Ferid Pasha cabinet it is giving them prominence after sorting and strengthening them. In reality our league has no connection whatsoever with the sources just mentioned, and can not have, since, as explained from the very beginning, our object is purely national and patriotic and follows an open course. To accept money from any source whatsoever, it is necessary for us who pursue a conservative and legitimate object, to sacrifice the money thus received to the intentions and wishes of the donors.

Generally speaking, our league does not require as large sums of money as is imagined. Ours is not illegitimate object, ac-

(215) One of Turkey's most notorious war criminals. As War Minister in 1914, he gave the orders that started the Turkish massacres of the Armenians. He was killed under mysterious circumstances in Bokhara, in 1922.

ceptance of which by a foreign power we are trying to obtain by means of money. Nor are we in a position obliging us to buy the conscience of some other nation. Nor, again, are we in the necessity of suggesting an unknown object to our nation, spending money for the purpose. Our league is the result of a pure and patriotic movement born of the national consciousness and consists in the adoption by this movement of a national form and organization. Our treasury is the conscience of the nation which has learnt to appreciate the value of independence and patriotism. The sources of our revenues are the spontaneous donations of the nation.

IX. After the armistice the European powers fell into the mistake of imagining that in Turkey there was not a nation conscious of its rights and ready to defend them. Whatever a lifeless country and a bloodless nation is worthy of that is what it was sought to apply to us. The idea was entertained at the Versailles conference of partitioning our fatherland and distributing its fragments as presents right and left. It is a subject for thankfulness that these preposterous decisions, which were calculated to plunge humanity in new tragedies, have been deferred. It is also a subject for thankfulness that the decisive resolutions concerning our fate have been made dependent on the deliberations and decisions of the American Congress. It was the faith placed in the nationalistic and natural principles put forward by the American Nation that brought about the end of the general war which has soaked the soil of the globe with human blood and strewn it with human corpses, thus causing the shedding of endless tears.

We entertain an unshaken confidence that thanks to the humane decisions of the Americans the ground will be found for the establishment of an enduring and perfect peace. We have no doubt that the American Nation and the American Congress, representing the cause of civilization, right, and

justice in its midst, have been sufficiently enlightened in regard to our pure-hearted Turkish people and its degree of attachment to and connection with civilization and will adopt the most efficient, equitable, and practical resolutions concerning its fate, leaving us thus overflowing with gratitude.

X. The Turkish people possess a more than 10-century-old right of existence in these lands. This is established by the survival of numerous relics of the past. As for the Ottoman State, it dates from seven centuries and can boast a glorious past and history. We are a people whose power and majesty were recognized by the world in three such continents as Asia, Europe, and Africa. Our men of war and merchantmen sailed the oceans and carried our flag as far as India. Our capabilities are proven by the power we once wielded and which had become world-wide. But during the last century the intrigues of the European powers in our capital and as a result of these intrigues their interference with our independence, the restrictions with which they trammelled our economic life, the seeds of discord they sowed between us and the non-Moslem with which we had been living on fraternal terms for centuries, and added to these circumstances the weakness and the resulting misrule of our Governments have acted as obstacles to our advance in the paths of modern progress and prosperity. The painful condition which is ours today does not in the least imply any radical incapacity on our part or incompatibility with modern civilization. It is solely due to the persistence of the adverse causes enumerated above.

We can give the most positive assurances that our country, if freed from the incubus of foreign intrigue and intervention and if its affairs are managed by a capable government respectful of the national will and wishes, it will presently assume a condition which will be a source of satisfaction to the whole world.

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We make a special point of adding that the assistance of a powerful and impartial foreign nation will be of great value to us in saving us from the iniquitous oppression of which we are the victims and in hastening our development.

We derive great hope from the Wilsonian doctrine embodying the nationalistic principle and from the spirit of justice and humanitarianism displayed by the American Nation in its action to insure its triumph.

MUSTAPHA KEMAL PASHA (216)

To the Armenian Border

Having brought his business in Sivas to a close, General Harbord, anxious to push on, gave orders for his command to prepare for departure from that city on the afternoon of the 21st. (217) When the Americans struck out from Kemal's city as per schedule, they were refreshed and invigorated after having been billeted in the American Relief Mission Building through the previous evening,—the first occasion they had slept indoors since leaving Istanbul. The twenty-first day of September was passed in travel; the Americans viewed the ruined Armenian village of Perkenik, and the Turkish communities of Kosh-Hisar, Yor Hisar and Zara,

(216) The text of the above MEMORANDUM is found toto in the "Khachadoorian Papers," at the Hairenik Building, in Boston. It is part of the report rendered by the Mission following its return to the United States (No. 16 in the Khachadoorian Papers). The Memorandum, in the Armenian, is also rendered in the December 1940 issue of the Hairenik Monthly which, though a sort of condensation of the full English report, is still valuable to the historian since it adds to Kemal's signature those of "Hussein Raouf" (Vice President) and (Secretaries) Emir Hami and M. Shoukri; it also renders the date the Memo. was prepared—Sept. 9, 1919—and the place of preparation—Sivas, Turkey. Kemal is carried as "President." These details are omitted from the English rendition of the Memorandum.

(217) A typographical error exists here in the Armenian story written by Khachadoorian ("AMMA" in Hairenik Monthly, January 1941, p. 131). There, this date is rendered "Sept. 2." September 21 is intended. The Mission entered Sivas on the 20th of Sept. and remained there the whole day. They must have left the city on the afternoon of the 21st.

(218) two miles from which they camped through a raw and stormy night.

With day-break, American eyes opened to behold the approach of a Turkish committee of welcome. Apologies were profuse for their not having been able to attend the Americans earlier because of the tardiness of the wire sent by Kenan Bey. And anybody who was anybody in the area showed up at the Mission camp—the military commander, the Kaimakam, the Kadi, the Mal Miouydir, the Beledieh Reisi, (219) etc., etc. In Zara, they said, dwelled in all 60,000 people: 50,000 Turks, 7,000 Kurds, 2,000 Greeks, 1,000 Armenians. 450 Armenians had been deported and only 198 of these unfortunates had returned to their ancestral hearths; and so thorough had been the Turkish pogrom of the Armenians, that the Mission did not see a single Armenian in the Zara environs.

The expected reception committee awaited the American mission when that dusty band reached Su Sheheri. (220) But the receiving line included Armenians and Greeks, as well as the usual Turkish officials. The contact was a notable one since it produced an uncommon act of bravery. Soon after the Mission was received by the local welcome group, Gaspar Siurmeian, representing the Armenians, came forward, and in the presence of the Turks, told General Harbord that all Armenians in the city had been deported and only 500 had come back home. But that wasn't all. Courageously speaking up, he reported that those Armenians who had returned to the community had not been able to regain possession of their properties confiscated by the Turks, a matter of re-

(218) Perkenik, a community 2 miles n.e. of Sivas. It was the birthplace of the noted Armenian poet Daniel Varoujan.—Other towns are near Sivas.

(219) "Mal miouydir"—a sub-district treasurer. "Beledieh reisi"—the president of a municipality (mayor).

(220) Su Sheheri (Watertown) (Enderes or Andrias), between Zara and Shabin Karahissar, and 55 miles n.e. of Sivas.

adjustment which was "progressing very slowly indeed." Armenian orphans and maidens were still hidden away in local Turkish harems, he concluded.

Though Kachadoorian makes no comments on what must have been a heartening scene to the Americans, it is plain from his manner of describing the incident that Siurmeian's vigorous representations had made an impression on the American group.

Moving on, the Mission, after passing through lovely and fertile fields where ruined villages lay in grim contrast to the natural beauties of the countryside, spent the night on a field 118 miles east of Sivas, very near a Turkish village in which were found practically no adult males, and more than half the buildings of which had been demolished.

Winding through valleys fraught with verdant beauty, dotted here and there with demolished hamlets, the American band reached the large city of Erzinga (221) at 2:00 P.M. of the 23rd of September, there finding the entire population turned out to greet them. Over the front steps of the governmental building there waited a large cloth sign "Vive L'Art, 12 des Principes de Wilson." And the usual wonderful banquet awaited them. Present at the repast were all governmental and military figures, as well as a Kurdish leader, a Greek priest, and two Armenians, identified only as Avetis and Arshak. Here the "reis" of Belediye, Khalil Bey, (222) told the Americans that in Erzinga before the war there had been found in residence 97,000 Turks, 32,700 Kurds, 15,900 Armenians—in all 148,000 people. After saying that at the present moment there were 61,000 Turks and 23,000 Kurds in the city, he admitted that there remained but 490 Armenians and 201 Greeks in Erzinga. 9,000 Armenians, he said, had been deported to "Kharpert and Diarbekir and more than

6,500 were either in the army or in the United States." (223) Of the present population of Erzinga, 75 % were busy on farms, and 25 % in business. 15,000 inhabitants were in great want, a large part of them women and children, and continued aid was necessary until next July or August. There were 300 orphans in the Turkish orphanage.

Probably because the area had served as a battleground, the environs of Erzinga, though basically fertile, were found to be in poor and unkempt condition. There was a notable lack of adult males, a tragic condition explained by Turks as a consequence of either the past war or the present unsettled condition within Turkey. The menfolk, said the Turk spokesmen had been either killed during the firing or else were members of the Turkish armed forces. And, they told the Americans, the dearth of manpower had resulted not only in the near wilderness, but in the starvation of the people, brought about by the cessation of farming. No American Relief Mission was found there, and no aid of any sort was extended by an American agency. So plightful were conditions in the district that the every effort of the Turkish authorities there was funneled into the grim struggle to stave off starvation. "The fields of Erzinga," wrote Kachadoorian, "could supply nourishment for 500,000 people. But the sad fact was that one-fifth of the population was starving away." (224)

As for the ruined Turkish villages which speckled the country-side, the Turks assured the Americans that such mayhem had been executed by Armenian and Russian soldiers during the late war; but the truth, when out, was that the Turkish soldiers themselves had demolished the village buildings during the course of the constant advance and retreat that marked the fluctuating battleline.

Finally leaving Erzinga, the Mission

(221) A large and important city east of Sivas.

(222) Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, autumn, 1915. Khalil was Chief of State Ottoman Council before that.

(223) Kachadoorian, *op. cit.* Hairenik Monthly, Jan. 1941, pp. 130, 131.

(224) *Ibid.*, p. 131.

camped for the night near a mineral springs hard by the main road. "The water of this spring" say the Mission's unofficial historian, "tasted like that of Vichy. Hot sulphur springs were found a few hundred feet in the distance. In America, this area would have been converted into a profitable health resort." (225)

The Mission traveled but 84 miles on September 24, even though the road, except at two bridges damaged possibly by military action, were found to be in good condition. These roads had been built by the Russians who had, from the appearance of things, spent considerable time and money in executing the improvements. During the fighting in the district, in addition, the Russians had extended the railroad as far as the outskirts of Erzinga.

The Turks were using this railroad at the moment of the Mission's visit in hauling coal from Kiurkiurdli to Erzerum, (226) averaging ten carloads of the precious fuel every two days. When the Mission reached the vicinities of Kiurkiurdli on the 25th of September, they found the same grim picture as encountered elsewhere in the area. "A village close by Kiurkiurdli," wrote Khachadoorian, "boasted but forty families, and broken families at that, where there had been 150 houses before the war. We were told that the reason for this was the war, illness and starvation." (227) But the Mission found no indications of massacres of the local people as result of the Russian occupation.

On the same day, the Mission was met by Karabekir Kiazim Pasha, (228) and other

high Turkish military figures, the Vali, Ahmed Reshid Pasha (229) and civil dignitaries who immediately took the Americans in tow, led them to the outskirts of Erzerum where, in an expansive field, elaborate preparations had been made to greet the representatives of the United States.

Karabekir, at the time the commanding officer of all Turkish armed forces from the Black Sea to the Persian frontier, had brought together for the occasion what were obviously the elite Turkish troops of his command. Curiously enough, the fantastic military pageant was salted with the taste of the Orient. Where there is a Moslem army, one finds an army of retainers, children and womenfolk. Here were drawn up not only the armed cavalry and crack rifle battalions, but also Turkish orphans "armed" with wooden rifles—rows and rows of urchins drawn up in stiff and uncomfortable salutes. Close by stood a veritable regiment of Turkish dignitaries and officers; and, most interestingly, the women folk were massed together in their special tents. Says Khachadoorian, in beholding this carnival: "Almost the whole population of the Province of Erzerum had been ordered out to meet us."

Festivities were opened by many orations. The Turks sang. There were horse-races, sword-play, and Lazes and Kurds came forward to dance for the amazed Americans. They then turned to the stomach. Tea ran in streams while a band gave forth with a special concert. The arena was bedecked gayly

of Kemal's strongest supporters. Appointed by Kemal as CO of the Turkish Third Army (May 1919), he subsequently went on Kemal's orders to Moscow, and entered into secret agreements with the Bolshevik leaders. A short time later, Karabekir led the Turkish attack on the Western boundaries of the Armenian Ind. Republic, as per arrangements obviously made by him while in Moscow. He subsequently ordered the massacre of 15,000 Armenians in Alexandropol, and slew a number of Armenian prisoners of war.

(229) An inconsequential figure, despite his lofty position.

(225) Ibid.

(226) Erzerum was the site of the first "Nationalist" Congress, July 23, 1919. It is east of Sivas.

(227) Khachadoorian, op. cit. *Hairenik Monthly*, Jan. 1941, p. 131.

(228) He died January 1948. In 1916, Karabekir was Chief of Staff, Turkish Army, at Baghdad. One year later he served in the like capacity in Kemal's Third Army which operated against the Armenians from Diarbekir. In 1918, he was regarded as one

with flags and all types of propaganda signs, the more prominent being those which eulogized "The Wilsonian Points" in huge letters.

After escaping from the place, the Mission toured the interesting spots of the ancient city of Erzerum. Everywhere buildings were in ruins. And as the Americans paused to eye the devastation, Turks tearfully pointed out to them what remained of two houses which, they swore, had been burnt down by the Armenians after jamming into the structures no less than one thousand Turks. "Those of the unfortunates who had been able to escape the flames," the weeping dignitaries said, "had been cut down by Armenian rifle fire." The Engineer Khachadoorian wryly points out however that the story was not worthy of credence since "from the evidence of the foundations of the buildings, one thousands people could not possibly have been found in the two buildings at any one time." (230)

A special visit was paid the Vali. It was apparent that there was great suffering in the city. At least 39,000 souls were in a state of want, and outside help was needed if starvation were to be veered away. The American Relief organization had no offices in the city.

Before the war, according to the Turks, Erzerum had been populated by 40,000 Turks, 4,500 Armenians, 500 Greeks—in all 45,000 people. When the Mission reached the community, the population had dwindled to 25,000, 20,000 of whom were Turks, 4,000 Kurds, 850 Armenians and 50 Greeks. The whole Province of Erzerum, ante bellum, had had 667,000 inhabitants—400,000 Turks, 200,000 Kurds, and 67,000 Armenians. These were the figures, though of course studiously in error, produced by Turkish officials who,

in giving the Mission these statistics, stressed two points. The Armenians, they wished to impress on the Americans, had not been numerous in the area before the war; there were not only less Armenians in Erzerum at the moment, but in many places no Armenians at all remained. But they said, this had not been, and was not, true also of the Turks. Was it not apparent from the statistics that there was a wide difference between the figures on Turks in the area before the war, and after the war? And look, they requested, at the case of Erzinga province. While the war had been on, 36,000 Turkish and 9,000 Kurdish citizens had been lost, while in Erzerum itself—were there not 20,000 less Turks?

But Erzerum Turkish hospitality had not ended. After the tour of inspection had been ended, the Mission was drawn to the governmental building where they were tendered a giant meal. Outside the building, a Turkish military band regaled the Americans with a varied selection of musical numbers, among them many passages from the late Armenian musician Chouhadjian's "Leblebiji Horor." (231) Later, a trio consisting of Turkish officials—piano, violin and flute—performed. Khachadoorian at least was not transported away by this introduction to Oriental sensuosity. Looking around him he noted that these were picked people—the best the Turks had. "Most of the military men at the banquet were handsome people; and they had yellow-faces."

The reader might wonder that the Turks so readily accepted an American soldier of Armenian ancestry, as they accepted Lt. Khachadoorian. But the depths of Turkish subtlety are hard to fathom. Here was an Armenian by birth, a man who had spent a large part of his life under the Turkish flag, who had left Turkey for the West, now returned to the land of his birth in the uniform

(230) On quote see Khachadoorian "American Military Mission to Armenia" (In Armenian) *Hairenik Monthly*, Jan. 1941, p. 131. There is absolutely no evidence that such a holocaust took place.

(231) An Armenian by birth, Chouhadjian wrote operettas in the Turkish language.

of a great nation lately the antagonist of Turkey in the most deadly war in history up to that time. One would imagine that they would treat such a man with humility; and in truth Khachadoorian was met with humility, if not outright deference. But the Turk saw in him a potential ally to be wooed, a man of dangerous influence. Read what Khachadoorian had to say:

"In all Turkish cities which we traversed, we would give the Turkish officials a listing of Mission members. At the many banquets, we invariably found our names carefully printed out on cards and placed at those spots on the table which we were to occupy. They knew, of course, that I was Armenian; and therefore it was no surprise when Karabekir himself bade me convey his greetings to General Nazarbekian, the commanding officer of the Armenian army on the other side of the border. And neither was I surprised when other high officials asked me to tell the Armenians the following:

"Armenians, it would be well to be friends of the Turks, and become reconciled, since there is nothing to be expected by the Armenians from the foreigners. You Armenians are still propagandizing, but you'll get no final benefit from all your efforts. The foreigners, sooner or later, will see the truth, etc. . . . Kiazim Pasha and the Erzerum officials gave us the best reception met with in Turkey," the American writer concludes. (232)

After a stay of six hours in the city, the Mission took the road from Erzerum at 5:00 P.M., reaching Hassan Kaleh (233) at nightfall. The road, again built by the Russians, was excellent, and the camp was pitched near hot sulphur springs. The Turks of the region, as usual, were very polite to the Americans.

On the morning of the 25th, Hassan Kaleh

officialdom and notables visited General Harbord. Here ensued a curious scene. A cordon of Turkish and Kurd 'emigrants' pressed around the Mission members begging that the Americans should "in the name of Allah, free us from the hands of the Armenian tyrants." But read what Khachadoorian had to say about the entire business.

"When I heard these people actually begging for salvation from the Armenians, I thought I was going mad and couldn't believe what I heard. So long had our ears been accustomed to hear of the ferocious character of the Turks that it was inconceivable to imagine the children of the same people being frightened of the same Armenians whom they had given to massacre for so many centuries. I admit however that there might have been a reason for the scene. These people were impoverished and ragged, homeless and unprotected women and children, refugees who had fled from the Armenians to their compatriots, even though the latter hadn't given them as much aid as they should have.

"But I must confess at the same time that they didn't impress me as being honest and sincere people. It was apparent that a group of them lied. I asked them point blank exactly why they were afraid. One said Ruben Balian was responsible for the killing of 120 Moslems. . . . Or else Kurd Asad Ismael Oghlu's 1600 sheep had been impounded by the Armenians. . . . Or a Turk by the name of Sabri, who supplied meat to the Armenians, had not been paid for two months and it was now feared that he was dead in Kars. . . . Osman Bey Zateh had been robbed in Bekir's home. . . . etc." (234)

And these were typical reasons why the Turks asked protection from the Armenians!

At 11:00 A.M., the Mission reached Khorassan (235) where Turk officials awaited

(232) Khachadoorian, *op. cit.*, *Hairenik Monthly*, Jan. 1941, p. 132

(233) 15 miles east of Erzerum.

(234) Khachadoorian, *op. cit.*, *Hairenik Monthly*, Jan. 1941, p. 133.

(235) Near Sarikamish and the Armenian border.

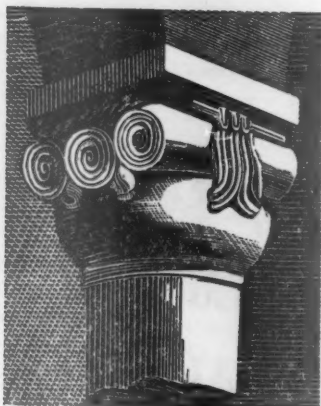
them with a soldier guard at salute. A wonderful meal, as usual, was provided.

At Khorassan, Mission member Gen. McCoy, taking with him Lt. Col. Bowditch and Pvt. Dicran Serjanian, (236) left the main group and, on horseback, took off to inspect

(236) See Mission roster, TAR, Summer 1949, p. 67.

the environs of Bayazit, then to proceed to Erivan where they were to rejoin Gen. Harbord's group. At 2:15, the main Mission group entered the boundaries of the Independent Republic of Armenia.

(NEXT ISSUE: The American Military Mission to Armenia and its tour of duty in the free Armenian state.)



MARLENE

By JAMES G. MANDALIAN

Marlene suddenly wrapped her arms around my neck, her cheek against mine, and firmly pressed me to her breast. Her kiss was spontaneous and generous. At all events that was the impression I got.

Marlene, if you do not know, is my little grandchild by virtue of my marriage, and not blood of my blood and flesh of my flesh. Note that when I got married, with one stroke I became husband, father, grandfather, uncle, and father-in-law, and took over all the roles of consanguinity which common mortals generally acquire after thirty years of toilsome married life. In one step I recaptured all the losses of my long bachelorhood and reestablished my dignity in social life with a vengeance. It was thus that Marlene became my grandchild.

When Marlene was born, she was a terribly ugly baby. Her neck was black as a nigger's, her nose flat, and her face was rugged and bristled as if it had been trampled upon by the heel of a Prussian military. Her beautiful young mother, Mary, lying there in her hospital bed, would take her in her arms, and watching that ugly face with her infinitely tender eyes, would chuckle: "I wonder if this little mouse of mine will stay this way forever."

Marlene was that unattractive.

But when she became one year old, suddenly there commenced an astounding transformation. Her plump little body took gradual form with attractive lines and graceful feminine curves. Her little moon face in which shone twin big sparkling eyes, two little lips on which played a perpetual innocent smile, her delicate and soft gurg-

lings, gave here a totality which was positively enrapturing, and whose charm the observers in vain tried to resist. But now that she is three years old and infinitely more endowed with her feminine wiles, she is already famous as the belle of her city.

Marlene's parents made frequent visits to our home in Medford, bringing with them little Levon who is six, and his little sister Marlene. On those occasions, seated there in front of the window, Marlene anxiously awaited my return from Hairenik each evening, and when she saw me in the distance stepping out of the street car, she would dash out of the house like a little bolt and would run to meet me. In my turn, I would scoop her in my arms and would climb the incline to the house. When inside the house I put her down, she would run, dance, clap her hands, and sing from sheer joy, while we spectators clapped our hands in appreciation of her skill.

There was a rational reason why Marlene loved me so much. It happened that one day I took her to the nearby drug store and bought her an ice-cream cone. This was a novelty which Marlene liked very much, but to me it was the beginning of a disastrous and costly slavery. Thereafter, at every visit, our evening promenade became the accepted custom,—the drug store and ice cream. "Affi" meant the ice cream, "Doo doo bye bye" meant "Come on, let's go," and "Kekhaag," the elongated Armenian word for hat, meant: "Put on your hat so we'll start." And when Marlene began to sing: *Doo-doo-bye-bye, Affin, Kekhaag*, I knew that the hour for our traditional pilgrimage had arrived.

As a matter of fact our promenade bore all the stately pomp of the procession of a victorious army returning from the battle. All our neighbours,—young couples, adolescents, fathers, mothers, little boys and girls, grandmothers and grandfathers,—seated in front of the windows, on the porches, or on the door steps, would smile at Marlene with boundless admiration and would greet her: "Hello, little girl." And Marlene, waving her little paw, would graciously acknowledge their greeting with a cooing "Hi-i-i-i-i!"

Once a beautiful young woman, who together with her husband was standing way over on the other side of the street, waiting for the Malden bus, saw Marlene and kept smiling at her until finally Marlene noticed here and rewarded her admiration with the classical "Hi-i-i-i-i."

On another occasion, an old woman who happened to be at the drug store when we bought the ice cream cone, saw Marlene, and unable to resist, timorously drew near, reverently stooped down, and after infinite hesitations, as if fearful of shattering a priceless vial, caressed Marlene's face with her gnarled boney hands, and like a prayer murmured: "My, my, what a cunning little girl!"

And still another time, when Marlene and I were making our evening rounds, a company of high school boys overtook us, and just as they passed us by the tallest among them looked at Marlene and whistled, just as young men do when they want to attract the attention of an extraordinary pretty girl. But that was not all. When the company reached the end of the block, the tall young man again looked back and whistled at Marlene.

Marlene was that irresistible.

But Marlene's exploits did not end here. Although the pleasure she gave me was boundless, equally boundless was the suffering which she inflicted upon me. She exacted a fearful price from me for my happiness

which she offered. Thus, aside from the loss of my time and money, she always insisted that, instead of walking with me, I should carry her in my arms, and after we had bought the ice cream, instead of heading straight for home, she insisted that our return should follow the most distant, the most tortuous, and the most grotesque routes in order to prolong her ride. Consequently, by way of doubling the distance I generally would strike out in the opposite direction heading for the market place, and then, cutting across, I would make a bee line for the far off Howard Johnson where, reversing my steps, I would land at the Catholic Church on Fellsway. By this time I would be thoroughly exhausted, and when I turned my face toward home, Marlene, sensing the imminent cessation of her pleasure, would protest vehemently: "No, no, no, no. No Mommy, no Mommy." Her face wrinkled in a fierce scowl, her whole strength pitted against mine, she would beat against my chest, and half threateningly and half coaxingly she would keep repeating: "No Mommy, no Mommy!"

It was in the midst of one of these fierce controversies that, one evening in front of the Catholic church, Marlene suddenly threw her arms around my neck, her cheek tightly pressed against mine, and fondly kissed me. At first I did not grasp the meaning of what had happened, and although I did not know what all this was about, I nevertheless liked it very much. How sweet was the kiss of this innocent little child! And in my intoxication I forgot my surroundings, forgot Secretary Marshall's Plan, forgot the rising cost of living, forgot Europe's displaced persons, forgot the balancing of my weekly budget, and forgot my tiredness. It won't pay to break such a little heart for so small a sacrifice, I said to myself. What was the ordeal of walking an extra mile as compared to such a priceless kiss? And I turned my steps in

the opposite direction of the Catholic church.

When the next evening, at the same place and under the same circumstances, Marlene repeated her act, for the first time I began seriously to ponder the significance of the happening. What was the unseen power which drove this little girl to such an expression of boundless love? What ocean of love in so little a heart? This thing cannot be explained by mere rationalization, I said to myself. This child cannot yet speak, cannot reason. This is not the act of conscious thought. The explanation must be sought in an entirely unknown source.

That night in bed I thought over the matter for long hours. On the screen of my mind there flashed the long list of the philosophers, — Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza, Kant, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche. I toothcombed all the great thinkers of history, beginning with Anaxagoras down to Bertrand Russell and John Dewey. I even took in all the epistemologists, not so much because I entertained any too great respect for them, but rather driven by an anxiety not to leave one stone unturned. I pondered the infinity and the eternity of the universe. I battered my head against the enigma of the First Cause. I tried to penetrate beyond the wall in time and space. What was behind the wall? Surely the wall could not be the end of all things. There must be some more space behind the wall. A second wall, and a third and a fourth. How many walls! I took a thorough stock of the natural forces, of evolution, inheritance, metaphysics, the physical, spiritual and moral currents, accumulated and transmitted throughout the centuries from generation to generation, which were largely responsible for those numerous, inexplicable and absurd human acts which only recently have become intelligible under the golden searchlight of psychoanalysis.

For hours my mind toiled, for hours it

fought, even as the wrestler fights against his mortal enemy, until late in the morning, when body and mind were thoroughly exhausted, the light dawned, and I found the solution of the puzzle which had been plaguing me.

Yes, that was it. That was the only explanation. That was the only way it could be. Any other explanation was both impossible and incomprehensible!

I kept my discovery to myself. I told no one about it, not even to my wife Roxy.

But my philosophical explanation was headed for a tailspin. My disillusionment came the third evening when, at the same hour and place, Marlene and I were wrestling over the little matter of whether we should continue our walk or return home, she suddenly threw her arms around my neck and kissed me,—the same spontaneous, genuine, and warm kiss. But this third kiss was a bit too much for me. "What the heck!" I mumbled under my breath. "What a fool I have been! What a consummate jackass of the universe!" The thing was simplicity itself. How could I have failed to have seen it? How could I have been so dumb? Why, this little three year old kid had simply been taking me for a ride. She had been bribing me with her kisses. How could she figure out that much at such an early age? Don't ask me. How did she know her power over a fifty year old man? Who taught her to use that deadly weapon against a university graduate? Whatever the answer, the fact was she had treated me most shabbily. This was nothing but a case of cheap, blatant and unvarnished cheating. And with the realization, down went my Aristotle, my Spinoza, my Schopenhauer, and my Nietzsche.

That evening I told my wife Roxy what had happened, from end to end, without omitting a particle, beginning with the first kiss until my plunge into the depths of metaphysics. "This kid of yours made a

chump of me," I protested indignantly.

I thought Roxy would sympathize with me in my humiliation and would take my side in the controversy between me and her grandchild. But to me was reserved a second, and an even more humiliating shock.

"You and your metaphysics!" Roxy burst

out with boundless disgust. "A two-year-old child can take you to the fountain and bring you back thirsty. Instead of reading your Shopinoor and Nishi, if you would just look around you you would learn a lot more out of life. You and your metaphysics!"

And Roxy burst into a hearty chuckle.

UNCHRISTIAN REFLECTIONS FROM A CHURCH PEW

*How placidly you sit, young Nat and June!
Three feet of carpet, ten of oak may break
My view, but lonely eyes cannot mistake
The slope of shoulders: telltale you commune
By more than Spirit. What can impugn
This mark of lately-weds? Why do you caze
My heart with leaden hopes, a mortal ache?
My dirge of grief filters to you a tune
For dancing. Ask I: have you felt
The word alone? Oh, understand, then,
As ice fears sun, I cannot bear
Sometimes your joy lest I be melt
To pools of vacant unshed tears when
I reach for love and naught is there.*

—ELIZABETH DERANIAN

THE MEMOIRS OF A MAYOR

Part III

By ALEXANDER KHATISSIAN

VI

The Underground Activity of the Parties And My Connection With Them (1907-14)

By going underground the parties did not stop their organizational and propaganda activity. Being persecuted by the government, their first task was to replenish their ranks left vacant by those who had been arrested or sent into exile. Consequently, their first step was to revamp the internal machine, to establish ties between the central office and the remote provinces, in short, to devote their entire time to the strengthening of the internal organizational structure. Political events had dealt a heavy blow to party ranks. Many of the followers had abandoned the field, and many party members had left the party for good. Needless to say, the most zealous and loyal element stayed with the ranks even during the most difficult moments of danger.

For the reconsolidation of their forces the parties had chosen two roads: one, the formation of trade unions, and the other, the launching of a course of lectures under the cloak of a people's university and newly-opened schools for adults.

The Social Democrats displayed unusual zeal in the formation of trade unions in

which I helped them both in word and acts. I lectured on trade union movements or acted as arbitrator in disputes between workers and employers. The question which concerned the workers was whether those unions would be partisan or non-partisan. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation insisted that they would be partisan while the Georgian Mensheviks advocated the opposite.

What the Georgians were aiming at was very plain. Under the name of non-partisanship they wanted to win over the Armenian workers and control the unions. The Federationists' view was altogether different. If the trade unions' role was the political struggle, they reasoned, then they could not very well be separated from the party life and the movements it initiated. It was the unions organized along the party line which eventually would form the federation of the workers.

I remember the first meetings of these unions which took place in the distillery of Ditrich attended by delegates from selected big factories. It should be stated that, with the exception of the tanneries, there were no big factories of railroads or tramways which employed huge masses of workers. Generally speaking, Tiflis was a city of small time producers and artisans. The

workers gladly joined the trade unions because that was the only way they could fight their employers in order to win shorter hours and higher pay. The government was not particularly worried over these trade movements. With the exception of Baku whose oil industry employed some 30,000 workers, there was no workers issue in Caucasus, a condition which prevented the workers from centralizing in one spot for their organization.

Many were puzzled by the fact that the Caucasus, which numbered a small workers population, sent a great number of socialist delegates to the state Duma in St. Petersburg. This was explained by the fact that the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and the Social Democrats, as socialist organizations, included among their members many non-socialist elements, peasants, artisans and masters, and only a fraction of their members were workers. The Armenian element under the Federation's banner was fighting for the liberation of Turkish Armenians, while the Georgians were fighting for the freedom of their language. The founders and ringleaders of the Georgian social democrats repudiated on every occasion the national aspect of their organization. However, the events of 1917 came to prove quite the contrary. It was the same social democrats who, pursuant to a national policy, proclaimed the independence of Georgia. But we shall more to say about this later.

The trade union movement was proceeding quite satisfactorily. In a short time the Armenians and the Georgians were following the example of European nations. I have not the slightest doubt that, if we were a free people, today we would have been classed among the civilized nations. As far as I know our two peoples of Caucasus, am familiar with their history, and have been a witness of their sufferings, their misery and their joys, I can confidently

assert that all the negative traits they have developed are the direct product of foreign oppression. When that oppression is removed and our two peoples take over the helm of their own fate, many of these negative traits will be eliminated.

The trade union movement was an excellent school for the workers of Caucasus, and as they had lee-way for free development, these unions in Tiflis, Baku, and Erivan brought to light a fruitful activity.

In Tiflis the seat of the trade union was the beautiful Aramian mansion where a magnificent organization came into being. The trade unions were busy improving the lot of the workingman. As Mayor of the city, my position was a delicate one, often being obliged to take a hand in it, both by virtue of my position and the authority which it carried. I often acted as mediator in resolving the differences between the workers and employers. The City Council, on the other hand, had authority to pass binding decisions in the regularization of labor.

I must say the City Council of Tiflis was the first in Russia to try to lighten the conditions of labor, to shorten the hours, to create more tolerable sanitary conditions for the workers, and to regulate the conditions of child labor.

The minute the trade unions felt strong enough to make new demands upon their employers the strikes began. The employers would not agree to these demands and the workers would stop work. The police watched over the buildings while the two sides appealed to me to carry on the negotiations until they arrived at an agreement. I remember mediating in a number of such strikes: such as the employees of the tramways, the cheese makers, the workers of public baths and shops, the workers of the electric power plant, and the workers of the tanneries, in all of which I succeeded in reconciling the two parties. In all this, there

was not a single instance of bloodshed nor any attempt of terrorism. Sometimes the provincial government hastened to arrest the ringleaders of the strikers, but upon my personal appeals they were soon set free. In all these clashes I always acted as the representative of the workers.

Only in one instance did I come forth as the representative of the employers — the owners of the cheese plant of Borchalu, while the Bolshevik Spandarian represented the employees. By mutual agreement, Stepan Shahoomian, likewise a Bolshevik, was appointed chairman of the board of arbitrators. It must be stated that Shahoomian, in spite of his party convictions, acted very impartially in this instance. At that time it was impossible to play ball with the Bolsheviks.

The trade unions tried to defend one another and when necessary they resorted to strikes. In such instances the City Council always tried to approximate the principle of an eight hour work day in its decisions.

I recall how the employees of the public transportation used to work 16 hours a day for a 60 kopek daily wage (2 francs) and that without a lunch hour. Only in my day the 9 hour work day became the rule and the daily wage raised to 2 rubles. We also succeeded in establishing the system of locking the doors of all shops at 7 in the evening and the Sunday holiday for all workers.

As the trade unions won fresh concessions, the prestige of the political parties which stood behind them correspondingly was enhanced. From then on the slogan of the party agents was: "The Party via the trade unions." When a party agent was arrested or sent into exile, or when the finger of a party was made known to the authorities, the party could not appeal to the law for redress but was obliged to appeal to the Mayor to defend them, to solicit in their behalf, or to pass a light sentence whenever

he acted as mediator. In this respect, I have rich recollections which best explain the behavior of the times.

One of these was the case of Isidor Ramishvili, the noted social democrat, who had been exiled to the province of Astrakhan. He wired me to intercede with the Viceroy to give him permission to visit his sick daughter in Tiflis for one week. Ramishvili promised that he would never engage in any revolutionary activity during that week. Upon my assurances for the strict observance of Ramishvili's word, the Viceroy gave the requested permission but he added:

"As to Ramishvili's word of honor, that's like the promise of a typhoid germ that it will not engender a disease if it falls into a human body."

The Viceroy of course knew the revolutionary workers and how useless their promises were, but he also knew that revolutionary movements could not be eradicated by forceful measures and that was the reason why he often resorted to compromise. He wanted to be advised on what was going on. There were men who spoke very well and the Viceroy was a good listener. He always let the other fellow have his full say. Once, upon his request, I took to him some noted members of the principal parties, and although we had a long conversation with him, nothing came of it. This was true of all such visits. Often I was obliged to go to him and intercede in behalf of prisoners or the exiled. Their wives and mothers daily pestered me with similar requests. Thus, I have interceded for Stepan Shahoomian, Noah Ramishvili, Tzeretelli, Djaparidze, Eliava, Petrosian and numerous Dashnaks and social democrats.

Especially delicate was my situation when I was obliged to defend two Armenian workers who had been sentenced to death for having killed a Russian architect in Karakilisseh. The Russian officialdom of

Karakilisseh was disturbed over it and demanded the death penalty for both and the court passed the death sentence. It was now up to the Viceroy to save their lives. The families of the condemned men had come to Tiflis, and on bended knee begged me to intercede in their behalf and commute the death sentence to one of hard labor. I went to the palace. After listening to me, the Viceroy called the commander of the troops. The latter told him that if he did not confirm the death sentence all the officers would be enraged. The Viceroy then turned to me and said:

"Do you see? Here are men who think different. I must satisfy them, too. For that very reason I must save one of them while the other must die. It's up to you to choose which one you want saved."

One of the condemned had a wife and two children; the other was a bachelor with two old parents. I had a difficult choice and yet time was short if I was to save at least one of them. I chose the father who had children, leaving the bachelor to face the death penalty. When I returned home, the families of both were waiting for me. I could scarcely control myself as I reported the Viceroy's decision.

But there was another case in which I refused to offer my protection. An Armenian youth who was jealous of Dr. Aghamalian for his attentions to his wife, under pretext of his wife's illness, calls the Doctor to his home, kills him, and cutting the body to pieces fills it in a sack. He then goes to a convent, as if in pilgrimage, drops the sack there and disappears. The case was brought to trial and the youth sentenced to death. His parents and wife implored with me on bended knee, crying all the while, but I refused my intercession lest my relations with the Viceroy were irrevocably severed. This gives you an idea of the variety of troubles on which my intercession was sought.

* * *

Nor was my position any better whenever I assumed the role of judge. As I have stated before, for all civic cases we had a special tribunal adjacent to the Court House of Tiflis whose members were 4 judges from the Court House, the leader of the nobility, the Mayor, and the village chief. I have already related an incident from the life of the terrorists of Havlabar and I will now relate two episodes which created a big stir in Caucasus at the time and whose reverberations reached as far as the Senate (the Supreme Court) in St. Petersburg. It should be stated that this court was unique in the whole of Caucasus.

The first case had to do with a band of six who were headed by the noted Georgian revolutionary Chkhikishvili who in the 20's, during the independence of Georgia, became Mayor of Tiflis and was shot by the Bolsheviks in 1924. The band was accused of having attacked and killed some Cossacks. It being a serious offence, the condemned men awaited a long siege of confinement to hard labor, but they were exempt from the death penalty because only the military courts could pass such a sentence.

The defence had engaged the best lawyers in Tiflis while the social democrat party followed the course of the trial and took care of the necessary expense. The trial itself was being held in a very tense atmosphere. There were persistent rumors that the revolutionaries would blow up the court house, a situation which irritated both the judges and the condemned men. They all expected the extreme penalty for the prisoners. The trial already had lasted five days and was nearing its end when a member of the central committee of the social democrats, Attorney D., came to me and begged me in the name of the party somehow to vitiate the trial.

The proposal was close to my heart, but how to do it? I decided to pretend illness.

I told the president of the court I had a fever and after the noon intermission I went to bed. The president begged me in every way not to be absent from the sessions but I told him in a letter that the seriousness of my illness would keep me in bed for several days. The president had expressed his doubts about the seriousness of my illness but the associate judges had insisted that if a physician confirmed my illness in writing they would be bound to believe him and close the matter.

My position of Mayor saved me from the embarrassment of a medical visit which could easily have exposed my hoax. I stayed in bed for four days, the trial was postponed and was later transferred to Odessa where the general atmosphere was peaceful and free from passions. Compared to the gravity of the offence, the penalty was light. The principal culprit, who was suffering from tuberculosis, was sentenced to four years of hard labor but by a queer twist of fate, 15 years later, upon his return from Siberia he was shot by the Bolsheviks together with Khomerikov and Valiko . . .

The second case was striking in its absurdity and injustice. In the city of Baku was published a Russian language newspaper whose editor was an Armenian by the name of K. Vermishian. When Vermishian visited Tiflis, the paper was edited by an associate. Once Vermishian came to Tiflis for a four day stay during which time the paper was published under his signature as managing editor. Just then an article appears in the paper from Persia, reproducing a letter by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation attacking the Shah of Persia. Vermishian had been careless in not removing his name from the masthead during his absence.

According to the Russian law an editor was held solely responsible for all articles which appeared in his paper, and consequently, Vermishian was arrested and turned over to the Supreme Court of which

I was a member. He was being blamed for being a member of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation because he had permitted the publication of a party circular in his paper, and despite the fact the article had been sent from Persia and was directed against the Persian Shah, the tribunal interpreted it as being directed against the Tsar. What irony!

Vermishian was far from being a revolutionary. It was he who could not dismiss the meeting held in the city hall on August 29, 1905 which ended with so much bloodshed. The revolutionaries unjustly blamed him for having sided with the government, while the government was persecuting him as a revolutionary. He barely escaped the terrorist's bullet.

In spite of the protests of the leader of the nobility and myself, the court sentenced him to life exile in Siberia. His attorney appealed the case to St. Petersburg and, as a result, Vermishian was confined in jail for long months. Finally, the appellate court fined him 300 rubles for having violated the laws of censorship and thus the matter was closed.

Another incident was the case of a 70 year old idealist writer named Rostomov who published a writing in which he visualized life one hundred years later when there would be no wars, no armies, no courts, and when brotherly love would rule the world. The writing was interpreted as a protest against the existing order and a call to rebellion. I was a member of the tribunal which tried this case. The court sentenced the aged Rostomov to life exile in Siberia and the old man took the road to exile.

These cases go to prove how the judicial authority was trying in every way to reinforce the position of the reactionary government. One of the functionaries of the Court House whose name was Lagoda was especially noted for his ruthlessness. He was hated by all the elements in the country.

I decided to call the Viceroy's attention to the matter, but as I have stated before, the judicial functionaries of Caucasus were not subject to the Viceroy's jurisdiction. The Viceroy finally made representations to St. Petersburg and Lagoda was removed from Caucasus.

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As I have stated before, the best means of propaganda were the public lectures and the people's university. There were three such universities: Russian, Armenian, and Georgian. The lecturers of the Armenian division were K. Khadzak and Ye. Topchian, both of whom were later killed in Turkey. The people's university was very popular among the masses which served to enlighten them in social sciences and the trade unions.

As a result of the failure of revolutionary movements a great number of office holders and workers were set free, giving rise to an army of unemployed in Tiflis. Upon the party leaders' appeal to find work for them and at my proposition the city council made an appropriation of 100,000 rubles for public works. It was decided to repair the pavements and the roads, to construct new buildings, etc. which provided work for a large number of the unemployed. In this work I was instrumental in the selection of the workers based upon the data furnished by party leaders.

The Tzarist government's sole thought was to take away from the people all those benefits which had been promised by the Tsar's edict of 1905. As a matter of fact, the only thing which was left from that edict was the state Duma which was shorn of many of its prerogatives. There was a silent fight going on between the Duma and the government. While the former strove to retain its powers, the latter was equally determined to deprive it of its legislative rights and to reduce it to the role of a consultative body. The reader is familiar with the ending of this struggle. In February,

1917, the Duma became the center of revolutionary agitation, overthrowing the Tzarist government and the Romanov dynasty, itself in turn to be overthrown by the Bolsheviks in October of the same year.

In the black reactionary days of the Tzarist government all the peoples of the country regarded their fate as tied with the Duma. Many believed that, through the medium of the Duma they would be able to avert the revolution and to proceed along the road of gradual, evolutionary progress. Many believed they would be able to bring about convulsive revolutions through the Duma. The Armenians went to the Duma to promote the legislative work. The Georgian social democrats: Chkhenkeli, Chkheidze, Gegechkori, and Djaparidze were revolutionary inclined. The Georgian nationalists demanded autonomy for Georgia, always blaming the Armenians for having captured the wealth and the influential positions of the country.

According to the electoral law, each citizen could be elected only in his home town where he owned a house and property. An Armenian living in Tiflis had no right to vote in Erivan. At that time our noted intellectuals lived in Baku and Tiflis and inasmuch as in neither of these cities we commanded a majority, it was impossible for us to send our best intellectuals to the Duma. We were compelled to be satisfied with our secondary intellectuals of Erivan. In this respect the Georgians were more fortunate than we, who drew their best forces from Tiflis and Koutayis.

There were two stages of the elections. The province of Tiflis had 35 electors who in turn elected their delegates from among themselves. The Armenians were entitled to six electors, five from the province of Akhalkalak 75,000 of whose 90,000 population were Armenians, myself, as property owner in the province of Tiflis and the town of Karayaz, being the sixth elector, chosen

by the Armenian property owners. All the Armenian electors were adherents of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. It was plain that we could not elect a delegate by our six votes, and consequently, we were obliged to concentrate our votes on this or that Georgian candidate. The Georgian parties, on the other hand, were at war among themselves. Prince Andronikov, a rabid nationalist, was the candidate of the nobility class, while Chkhaidze was the choice of the social democrats. Our vote would tip the balance in favor of either one or the other. The social democratic candidate was a socialist who was more concerned with general Russian affairs, and assuredly would leave us alone in the Duma, whereas Andronikov, as a rabid nationalist, always expatiated against Armenians and their influence. We decided in favor of Chkhaidze.

One day before the elections the Viceroy called me to him and told me that the Georgian nationalists appealed to him to use influence to win over the Armenian votes in favor of Andronikov. The Viceroy had promised them to speak to me about the matter.

"I have no right to interfere in your internal affairs," the Viceroy said to me, "I have not even the right to ask you what your decision is. However, in view of our mutual relations, I ventured to broach the matter to you."

I immediately told him of the decision of the Armenian electors and asked him how he would have acted if he had been an Armenian. The Viceroy replied that he shared our view, inasmuch as Chkhaidze's fight was directed against the government, whereas Andronikov, as a partisan of Georgia, would always attack the Armenians. It is true that Chkhaidze will fight against the Tsar, but one revolutionary more or less mattered little. It was different with the case of Andronikov who was bound to criticize the

administration of Caucasus and surely would not let the Viceroy alone.

I told the Viceroy we saw eye to eye and he said to me laughingly that he had exerted no pressure upon me and that he would tell the nobility he had carried out their request by speaking to me. Chkhaidze won the election, and I must confess that he left the Armenians alone in the Duma. He and another social democrat came to thank me for the Armenian vote which enabled him to win the Duma seat. As the reader is aware, it was this same Chkhaidze who in 1917 headed the all-Russian workers and soldiers soviet in St. Petersburg.

When in 1914 Tsar Nicholas II came to Tiflis, after he visited the city institutions, he sent word to me through the minister of the palace offering me ranks and medals for my services to the government. But when the Viceroy heard of this he advised me to decline the honors. The greatest honor which could come to me, he argued, was the Monarch's attention itself. But if I accepted his gifts I would lose the confidence of the masses as well as my worth in the eyes of the government, because it was the confidence of the parties and the people which raised my prestige before the government. I acted according to his advice and later, when I became minister and Premier of the Independent Armenian Republic, I carried with me the confidence of the same people and to this day I have neither any rank nor titles. During my ten years of service in the government of Caucasus, while maintaining the best of relations with the government, I never once made use of my position for personal gain but used all my energies in the interests of my people. It was because of this that during the 1917 revolution I retained my position as head of the government of Tiflis and later in the government of Armenia.

VII

The Needs of Caucasus and My Trip to Petersburg

The public and economic life of Caucasus was cluttered with many problems not all of which could be solved by the local authorities. There were problems which should be submitted direct to Petersburg and which required the consent of the central government or even the Tsar for their solution. Such questions as the schools, the opening of hospitals and the construction of roads and bridges could be settled by the local governments, but such matters as the establishment of autonomies, judicial reforms, and the opening of higher schools required the intervention of the central government, and consequently I was obliged to make frequent trips to Petersburg and make personal representations for their solution.

Those questions were of vital importance for the Caucasus. Take for example the matter of higher schools, a need which was keenly felt by the leaders of Caucasus. The City Council made several appeals to Petersburg in this respect but each time the central government replied that the time for higher schools in Caucasus had not arrived yet. It should be stated that the City of Tiflis had appropriated a sum of 100,000 rubles and a patch of 200 hectare land part of which was to be set aside for the construction of a school, and the remainder would be sold in the interests of the higher educational institution which would be set up. In view of the fact that this patch of land had a high real estate value, being located on a high elevation and being linked with the center of the city by electric transit, the appropriation of the city amounted to close to one million rubles. The section where the university plot was located was called Havlabar where the population consisted of Armenians who had come from Erzeroum. Here also were lo-

cated the other institutions of the city, such as the hospitals, the stockyards and the barracks of the Russian army.

The foremost question which confronted the Caucasians was the form of the school to be opened, whether it was to be a university, with its judicial, medical, historical and natural science departments, or a polytechnical school with its specialties in architecture? At first the opinion was prevalent that what the country needed was a university as an indispensable center of cultural development. However, during the last years when the natural resources of Caucasus were being exploited, giving rise to the development of cotton and rice industries and the proposition of constructing a water system, people began to switch to the idea of the necessity of a specialized school with all its branches of architecture.

The first things to be settled were the provision of the needed sum, the consent of the government, and the location of the numerous buildings of the new school, in the solution of all of which I was called upon to act. First of all, in order to insure the government's consent, much depended upon precisely how much the Caucasus could furnish toward the construction of the new institution. Tiflis already had offered its mite. The other cities of Caucasus, Batum, Erivan, and Koutayis chipped in out of their meager resources, some with 2 thousand and others with 10 thousands rubles. There remained Baku which thanks to its oil wealth could make a material contribution to the venture. Aside from the civic administration, Baku had an administration of oil industry, the first, headed by a Russian Mayor, being under the influence of the Tartars, while the second was controlled by the Armenians.

Viceroy Count Vorontzov-Dashkov favored the idea of founding an educational institution in Caucasus which gave us courage seriously to apply ourselves to the task

of fund raising, a thing which would greatly facilitate the task of obtaining the government's consent, inasmuch as, having provided the necessary sum, we would not be a burden to the State treasury. We decided to go to Baku.

There were three of us from the City Council: myself as Mayor, the Armenian Prince Toumanov, the editor of the Russian newspaper "Novoye Obozdeniye" and the Georgian Gotua, the editor of the Georgian newspaper "Rebirth." We were accorded a cordial reception in Baku by the Mayor and his delegation. At that time my brother Constantine Khatissian was an influential person in Baku, as the president of the Baku Technical Union, and member of the Armenian General Benevolent Union and City Authority. Through him I became acquainted with the Armenian intellectuals of the city and their general dispositions.

We soon started our visits, first calling on Hadji Zeinal Abdul Taghiev, a member of the City Council, who wielded a great influence in the affairs of the city. Thanks to his born ability, Taghiev, a common stone-cutter, had become the wealthiest and the most influential man in Baku. As a benefactor, he had founded a wool mill and for his general activities he had been rewarded by the Russian government with the rank of a civilian general. He was married to a young, beautiful and cultured Turkish girl. We knew that without his consent we would not succeed in the City Council.

The second day of our arrival, Taghiev invited us to dinner, while the evening was set off for a session of the City Council. All the members of the City Council, nearly 70, were invited to the dinner. They met us with an ovation and I answered them with our thanks, meanwhile explaining to them the object of our visit, whereupon Taghiev rose to his feet and said: "Your venture is very close to our hearts. We will donate 400,000 rubles."

Taghiev sat down amid thunderous cheers.

The gesture was highly significant, even before the session of the City Council, during a special dinner, one man had settled the matter for all. In the evening we attended the session where the Mayor, in opening the meeting, presented our proposition. After my response, Taghiev took the floor and moved that the council appropriate a sum of 400,000 rubles for the Polytechnique Institute of Tiflis. The motion was carried unanimously, without any discussion.

The next day the proposition was presented to the company of the oil industry in which the Ghookassian brothers wielded a great influence. After a few speeches, here too a sum of 400,000 rubles was voted upon. Thus, our aims were fast being realized. Baku was with us one hundred percent. We decided personally to call on Taghiev and offer him our thanks for his support. Taghiev received us cordially and a little later asked me to step into his private office for a personal interview.

I must make a diversion here. Taghiev had a protege who had learned architecture at his expense. The name of the protege was Bebutov. There had begun some intimate relations between the young architect and Taghiev's young wife. Infuriated, Taghiev had ordered his servants to administer a sound beating to Bebutov the next time he called. The servants had carried out the order, and despite his advanced age, his services, and his influence, the court had sentenced him to a term of imprisonment.

In his private office Taghiev asked me immediately to wire to the Viceroy telling him Taghiev had made a substantial contribution to the Polytechnique Institute. He knew that the Viceroy favored the project and thus he wanted to win his sympathy. Then he casually said he wished the Viceroy to intercede in his behalf before the Tsar to remove the penalty which had been imposed upon him.

Immediately upon my arrival in Tiflis I asked the Viceroy to solicit the Tsar's intervention and old Taghiev was released from the ignominy of imprisonment.

Already we had more than one million rubles, including the proceeds from the sale of the city lands. All we had to do now was to obtain the Tsar's consent and decide upon the site of the school. The latter question aroused the national passions from the very first day. The site decided upon by the City Council was located in Havlabar which was inhabited by the Armenians. This site was located on the hilly side of the city. The Georgian nobility presented another site, likewise 200 hectares in area, but located in the lower part of the city. Both sides had their advantages and disadvantages. The public atmosphere was poisoned. All the public workers, the press, and the people took part in the debate with vehement passion. For months all minds were occupied with this question. Baku and Koutayis likewise entered into the quarrel and gradually the controversy assumed the proportions of a general Armeno-Georgian encounter.

Finally, it was left to the Viceroy to arbitrate the matter. He organized a special committee of 16, consisting of scientists and high government functionaries. The committee was authorized to make a comprehensive study of the question and report to the Viceroy. The committee examined the question, taking into account the agronomical aspect, the direction of the winds, the dampness, and the means of transit, as if it was deciding upon an important question of state import.

The city site had its proponents in the person of the scientists and the political leaders of Baku, and finally it was decided that the new building would be constructed on the city site, namely the Armenian section, thus creating a tense situation in the Armeno-Georgian relations for a long time.

At the behest of the City Council, I left

for St. Petersburg, taking along with me a number of questions. The first of these was the question of the new school; the second was the question of provincial autonomies; the third pertained to the installment of a system of sworn judges; and the fourth the construction of a rapid transit. Cutting through the Caucasian mountain range, the transit line was to join Tiflis with Vladikavkaz, and with a 20 verst long tunnel, it would cut the distance between the two cities from 24 hours to 4 hours all told.

Equipped with all the necessary documents and with the Viceroy's blessing, I set out for St. Petersburg in high hopes. At that time the president of the Council of Ministers was Stolypin who later was assassinated by the hand of a revolutionary provocateur. Stolypin received me quite coolly. It must be stated that the relations between him and the Viceroy were likewise cold. Stolypin complained that the Viceroy had adopted an exceedingly mild policy, instantly appealing to the Tsar in all matters. He looked at me as if I were the delegate of a country which did not fully submit to his authority. After the hearing he said to me:

"I am surprised, Mr. Mayor of Tiflis, that you have come to me with such questions. You have someone in Caucasus who is something like a Tsar to you. He could easily have made the decisions and settled all these matters."

Then, after a moment of silence, he added:

"The Count has written to me about all this, as well as your coming. As to what pertains to the higher institution, I have formed my own special committee from the assistants of the ministry and headed by Minister of Education Kasso. As the representative of the Ministry of Interior, Police Chief Zouev will take part in the committee's labors. In regard to provincial autonomies, I find it premature to pass a favorable judgement, inasmuch as the Caucasus just now is in a revolutionary flurry, and these

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will become hotbeds of the revolution. I don't think the establishment of sworn judges in Caucasus is timely just now. The Armenian judge will defend the Armenian, the Georgian judge the Georgian, and the Turkish judge the Turk. That leaves the question of the railroad line. It seems to me, that is an impossible venture. You know well that just now we are concerned with the construction of the Black Sea railway line. There the princes have huge estates and are very interested in its completion as soon as possible. It is plain that you will never succeed in carrying out this project."

After listening to the observations of the President of the ministers' council to the propositions which I had laid before him I replied that I would try to prove the feasibility of my propositions with facts and figures, showing that the peoples of the Caucasus were ripe for reforms. Stolypin asked me to leave with him my written reports for his personal examination.

I realized that mine was a most difficult and unequal fight in St. Petersburg. My whole hope lay in the knowledge and friendly letters of Vorontsov Dashkov addressed to the former President of the ministers' council Count Witte and the Finance Minister Count Kokovtzev. I first called on Witte, the man who in 1906 had given Russia her first constitution and who was the strongest ruler of Russia at the time. Although a forgotten man now, nevertheless he was a close friend of the Tsar, as close as Vorontsov—Dashkov, because both had been ministers in his court, as well as in the court of his father Alexander III. The two constituted the liberal wing of the Russian bureaucracy.

Witte received me with complaints that the government of the day was leading the country into reaction, thus contributing to the development of the revolutionary elements. He said he himself had no influence over the rulers of the day and therefore he

was unable to help me in any way.

Next I called on Count Kokovtzev who, after the assassination of Stolypin, became the President of the Ministers' council. He was opposed to the idea of founding a higher educational institution in Caucasus. In his opinion, the students would learn nothing. All that would interest them was their diplomas. Therefore, there was no need of taking the time of specialty professors by giving lectures when the student body was the same and would not listen to them. If they wished, the Caucasians could always advance their education by attending schools in Russia.

Having struck a snag here too, I decided to call on Guchkov, the President of the State Council, to solicit his support in interceding with Stolypin: Guchkov was the leader of the Octoberians, the greatest party of the State Council who as reactionaries defended Stolypin. This party consisted of huge land-owners and property-owners. It seemed to me Kuchkov could influence Stolypin, but he too expressed himself as opposed to the establishment of provincial autonomies, arguing that such autonomies would turn into national hotbeds, threatening the integrity of Russia.

I have purposely gone into the details of these objections and opinions advanced by the Russian rulers of the time in order to show how their reactionary policy was promoting the revolutionary tendencies of the people. The police force, the gendarmerie, the army and the dark forces of the country, all assembled in the so-called "Russian People's Union," constituted the buttress of the reaction. Subsequent events showed that these forces did not raise a finger to save the Tsar and the throne.

Thus, having found no support among the government circles, I decided to appeal to the leaders of the leftist parties of the State Duma and the editors of the influential papers. I had interviews with professors

Kovalevsky and Milyukov, and although the leftist factions of the Duma waged a perpetual fight against the government, nevertheless all my efforts were fruitless. Through the medium of free press and speech they too wanted to rally the liberal elements of the country, but the government was deaf to their voices. Stolypin kept saying to them: "You want great upheavals; we want a great Russia."

"You don't scare me," he would say to those delegates who pointed out to him the insufficiencies of the peasantry. Against the assassinations and acts of terror he fought with the scaffold. The scaffolds were so busy that one member of the Duma sarcastically called them "Stolypin's necktie." I could see all this but what could I do? My role of Mayor forced me to proceed along legal lines, to make the government understand the people's demands. I had no other way except the government's way, although my heart was filled with hatred against that reactionary government.

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One week after my arrival in St. Petersburg I received an invitation to attend the session of assistant ministers, headed by Minister of Education Kasso who was a Greek by birth. Before attending the session I called on Grand Duke Nicholas Mikhailovich, the son of the former Viceroy of Caucasus who was known in all Russia as a good historian, highly cultured, and a liberal prince. He was executed by the Bolsheviks in 1919. The Grand Duke knew my father and our entire family. He listened cordially to my propositions but said he could do nothing for me. Pointing with his hand to the Winter Palace, he said to me:

"There is no one there who listens to me. They don't even like me. I love the Caucasus, I spent my childhood there, I often go there, but what can I do? My hands are tied."

In 1916 the Grand Duke had warned the

Tsar of the danger which threatened the throne and his entire dynasty, but instead of replying to him, the Tsar had exiled him from St. Petersburg.

Thus, having been obstructed every inch of the way, I went to the assistant ministers' session to give my report concerning the need of a higher school in Tiflis for which we asked not a cent from the government. They had asked me to make my appearance one hour before the session. I was received by Minister of Education Kasso, one of the Tsar's most reactionary dignitaries. I submitted to him my report about the need of a specialty school in Caucasus. Kasso told me he was familiar with the question, that the Viceroy had already written to him about it, that all the ministers would take part in the session, and that, before he expressed his opinion on the matter, he would first have the opinion of the others.

Exactly at nine o'clock they invited me to the session. There were 15 of them altogether, seated around a round table—assistant ministers seated alone, or accompanied by departmental directors. Dressed in formal attire, tight-buttoned, facing the paper platters, they sat solemn and silent. They asked me to sit next to the St. Petersburg representative of the Viceroy who was to speak in his behalf.

Kasso opened the session, announcing that the question of the Caucasus school was the sole order of business. The first to speak was the Viceroy's representative who in a few words presented the Viceroy's affirmative stand, adding that the Caucasus already had provided the necessary financial means and that all that the council of the ministers had to do was to obtain the Tsar's consent. I was the next to be called upon to speak.

I took time to go into the details of the imperative need of Caucasus for a polytechnical school, not only because the Caucasus was rich in oil, in manganese and other natural resources, not only because

the Caucasus was in a position to defray the necessary cost of the enterprise, but because the climate of Russia was unsuited for the health of the Caucasians (tuberculosis worked havoc with them) who wanted to pursue their advanced education.

After my speech, the president called upon the others to express their opinions. The first to speak was Zuev, the representative of the Interior Ministry and the chief of the police department. Stolypin himself was the Minister of Interior as well as the President of the Ministers' Council. Zuev approached the question from the viewpoint of the police department and the security of the country. He said statistics prove that the greater part of revolutionary students of Russia are Caucasian. Under the circumstances, opening a special school in Caucasus would only serve the promotion of revolutionary aims and would jeopardize the security of the country. "The Ministry of Interior," he concluded, "is definitely opposed to the idea of opening a new school in Tiflis."

The representatives of all other ministries likewise came out against the idea without giving any reasons. The only man who spoke in favor of the project was Count Ignatiev, the representative of the ministry of agriculture, quoting the unique agricultural conditions of Caucasus which produce rice, cotton, tobacco and fruit-bearing trees. Our proposition was rejected.

After taking care of a number of secondary economic matters I returned to Tiflis where I gave a report to the City Council in regard to my labors in St. Petersburg. I also made a report to the Viceroy. My discomfiture had left me at an impasse. What to do? After thinking it over for a long time I decided to make another appeal to the Viceroy. I told him the people of Caucasus knew that he was for the polytechnical school and that, to prevent the falling of the government's prestige in the

eyes of the people, he should make a personal appeal to the Tsar and obtain his consent. The Viceroy consented and promised to meet the Tsar in Crimea and ask for his consent.

And as a matter of fact the thing happened. In September of 1913 the Viceroy brought with him from Crimea the Tsar's order for the opening of the school. Tiflis gave the Viceroy a royal reception in which I gave the welcoming oration. It was a terribly rainy day. We had waited for six long hours for his arrival. I caught a cold and was ill for six months.

Work on the construction was started but one year later the war broke, interrupting the work. Then came the revolution and the founding of the Caucasian republics which paved the way for the opening of two universities and a polytechnical school in Tiflis. Another university was opened in Baku, while in Alexandropol was founded the first university of Armenia whose first president was my uncle from the mother's side, Prof. Ghambarian. I was present at the opening of the university as a representative of the Republic of Armenia.

During the days of Caucasian independence the system of sworn judges was also adopted but the matter of rapid transit was left unfinished to this day.

Thereafter I made several other trips to St. Petersburg but entirely on different matters. These were new issues having to do with the government which were intimately connected with the conditions in Caucasus. They are of such importance that I shall relate them in turn. First I shall relate two of these trips, one in 1913 when Russia was solemnizing the 300th anniversary of the Romanoff Dynasty, and the other had to do with political matters in which I tried to secure the confirmation of the election of the Armenian Catholicos through the Ministry of Interior.

On the occasion of the 300th anniversary I

was present at the imperial palace where a sumptuous dinner had been prepared for 2000 high-ranking dignitaries, the Tsar, and his family. I sat next to Prince Andronikov, the Mayor of Batum. After the dinner we were served peaches for desert. As the Prince critically examined the fruit before touching it, thinking the Prince had never seen a peach in his life, the waiter remarked: "These are not potatoes, they are peaches."

My second trip to St. Petersburg, among other things had for its aim the confirmation of the newly-elected Armenian Catholicos Gevorg Surenian, for whom I had voted as a delegate. The other contestant for the patriarchal throne was Patriarch Ormanian of Constantinople. Before the elections I had an interview with the Viceroy who asked me, if it was not a secret, who my candidate was. My companions and I had no secret and therefore I plainly told him I was for Surenian. When he agreed with me I asked him why he opposed the candidacy of Ormanian to which he replied that Surenian was a Russian Armenian. "He knows us," he said, "he speaks our language, he is the candidate of the Dashnaks whom we recognize; whereas Ormanian is a crafty diplomat of the Turkish type who should be feared."

Surenian was elected but the government of St. Petersburg hesitated in confirming his election because Surenian had won through the Dashnak votes and might act as the flag-bearer of Dashnak policy. However, Surenian proved a very loyal Catholicos and stood on his dignity in the days of our independence and later during the Bolshevik persecutions.

VIII

Caucasus On the Eve of the War

The Caucasian peoples, especially the advanced elements in the person of the intellectuals and party leaders, fostered two

types of ideas. Some of them, as Russian citizens, were attached to Russian culture and intellectuality, as strongly as they were attached to their national ideas. Some lived solely in their national ideals, regardless of the general state interests. During my activity I was attached to the former group.

The influence of the Russian culture, of great Russian cities such as St. Petersburg, Odessa, Moscow, Kiev, Kharkov and others, the ties with the Russian intellectuals, and lastly the political contacts had linked the youth of Caucasus with the free thought of Russia. Our Turkish Armenian brothers who received their education in Armenian or French schools bore the Armenian or European stamp. There was no such thing as Turkish culture. The latter fact accounts why Turkish Armenian intellectuals were severed from Turkish life. The Armenian population of Turkey, with the exception of a few high-ranking government functionaries and merchants, were subjected to an unspeakable tyranny, morally, economically, and physically.

There could be no comparison between the Turkish and Russian tyrannies. The Russian government only stood in the way of Armenian national culture, whereas the Turks threatened their physical existence. Suffice it to say that not a single Russian Armenian wanted to live under the Turkish rule, whereas every Turkish Armenian wanted to move to Russia where he could find peaceful conditions of labor. To be just, it should be admitted that the high Russian culture, the language and the charm of the Russian woman played no small role in luring the Armenian intellectual class and the city folk — a situation which disturbed our Turkish-Armenian brothers as a sign of dissimilation. As early as 1914 the well-known Turkish Armenian writer Zohrab confided to me his apprehensions in this respect.

Thousands of Armenian and Georgian

youths studied in Russian universities and technical schools. The best years when a man's spiritual world is in formation, when the first foundations of world outlook are being laid, our youth spent in Russian cities, rubbed elbows with the representatives of Russian revolutionary mind, and naturally were greatly influenced by Russian ideas. If we pause a moment on the story of the formation of our political parties, we shall see that the constitution of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation is quite similar to the Russian Social Revolutionaries. As a matter of fact there were men who were members of both organizations.

For 20 years the Georgian Social Democrats were a part of the Russian Social Democratic party until 1918 when they seceded and formed the Georgian Social Democratic Party. The same is true of the Armenian and Georgian Socialist Revolutionaries. They were both imbued with the idea of overthrowing the Tsarist government and establishing the democratic order. Until 1917 they did not even think of separating from Russia and establishing independent states. It was the February and October revolutions of 1917 which brought these factions over to the idea of nationalism. As the reader will see, the changes in the political program of the Caucasian parties were the product of the development of objective conditions and the cultural rise of the people.

In our chapter on the formation of independent states we shall have more to say as to the role of the Bolsheviks in overthrowing these governments. Here we shall only emphasize the unique phenomenon of how the Georgian Social Democrats who were rabid proponents of a centralized government, who did not want to listen to any talk about secession, and who used to blame the Armenian Revolutionary Federation of nationalism, suddenly turned into rank nationalists and became the pioneers of the

liberation and the secession of their people.

The political transfiguration of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation was the logical result of the normal development of its political program. Why then, the paradox of the Georgian Social Democrats? Plainly, under the conditions, both parties were striving to create tolerable conditions for the free development of the people's genius.

* * *

As a democratic socialist party, it seemed the Armenian Revolutionary Federation at once would take up the fight against the Russian monarchy in order to overthrow the Tsarist supremacy. However, the party was confronted with another pressing problem, namely the question of emancipating the Turkish Armenians, whereas, the Russian government, as a power which aspired to expand toward the South Black Sea, was regarded as an ally of Armenian aspirations and interests. Was it not true that for two hundred years Russia had fought the Turk in her onward march to the south? Did not the Russians consider themselves the "centuries-old enemy of the Turk"?

The Armenian political mind always has been confronted with alternatives between Tsarism, the Provisional Government, and today, the Soviet regime. The contingency of these alternatives has always been both fatal and tragic to the Armenians. On the eve of the great war, as well as during the Balkan war, when Turkish Armenia was being subjected to severe blows, the Armenians through their clergy and the intellectuals appealed to Europe and Russia to improve the lot of Turkish Armenians. The mentality and mood was a big factor in determining the course of Caucasian Armenians in the great war when in October of 1914 the Turks took the offensive against Russia.

The Georgian people had an entirely different psychology. They had no entangle-

ments with the Turks. Their internal political life proceeded along two directions. The revolutionaries were attached to the Russian revolutionary movements, while their nobility had tied its fate with that of the Russian nobility and the Tsar's throne. Both elements were indifferent to the Balkan war, while in the great war their dispositions were no different than those of their Russian companions of fate.

The Tartars, the third element in Caucasus, were for the Turks one hundred percent. The Turkish language, the culture, the religion, and the racial bond cemented these two peoples politically. The small Tartar intellectuality was spiritually attached to Turkish culture in spite of the fact that they had received their education in Russian universities. The Russian influence was visible in them only externally. Tartar intellectuals had no influence whatever on the Tartar people, who were completely dominated by the clergy, the Khans and the Begs. Turkish political interest found a wide echo among the Tartar people. However, they habitually abstained from expressing their real thoughts, and especially they avoided taking any steps which smacked of protest. The Russian press disregarded them, whereas the other elements of the Caucasus were not even aware of their real aspirations.

By virtue of my office I had frequent opportunities of rubbing elbows with the Tartars of Tiflis whose number did not exceed 5,000. I often met Turkish intellectuals and the Sheikh-ul-Islam, and I must confess that they invariably received me with utmost courtesy and respect, an attitude which never changed at least in their expressions.

In spite of the fact that these three peoples lived side by side in the City of Tiflis, all three had crawled into their national shells and only their business dealings brought them into contact with one another. No serious public venture was ever

inaugurated by the initiative and the co-operation of the three. The banks, for example, were either purely Armenian or Georgian. The Armenians did not read Georgian papers, the Georgians did not read Armenian papers, while the Turks ignored them both. Many Armenians spoke the Georgian language but the Georgians did not know Armenian.

The Russian population consisted of the officer class. The Russian institutions, the press, the clubs, and the schools played alike to the Armenians, the Georgians and the Turks. The Russian church was a state institution which the Georgian abhorred. The Armenian church was a national institution, independent of the Russian church. For this reason, the Armenian political leaders, the party leaders, and the intellectuals took all matters of national and public interest directly to the Prelacy or the diocesan prelate.

* * *

Thus, life went on along different paths, each people having its worries, its plans whenever the matter pertained to the national cause. But, as the citizens of the common fatherland, they all shared the same mood, they all waited for big changes. "It is sad to live this life longer". This was the common denominator of the general mood.

The year 1905 relaxed for a moment the iron chains of the Russian monarchy, but soon the reaction reorganized itself and rallied its forces, again tightening the iron chains. "First the peace, then the reforms" was the slogan of Russian prime ministers. But the years passed, August of 1914 was drawing near, and yet there was no peace. Those were grave years. The people could see that legal channels were impotent to give them satisfaction. The revolutionary tempo had spent itself during the rebellions of 1905-7. The people lived a dull meaningless life, and this not only in the Caucasus but in entire Russia.

The only exception to this rule were the Armenians who were hard pressed with the question of reforms for Turkish Armenia. I have already mentioned how the Balkan war brought to the fore a number of questions having to do with Turkey. On October 2, 1912, Gevorg VI, Catholicos of all Armenians, through the Viceroy, appealed to the "All-pitiful" Emperor to intervene in behalf of the Turkish Armenians to the end of lightening their burden. In reply to this appeal, as he himself wrote, the Catholicos received the assurances of the Imperial Government that the Armenian question would be the object of serious consideration and that the government would busy itself with the fate of the Armenian people.

As known, after the appeal of the Catholicos, there took place in Constantinople a conference of ambassadors in which it was decided to appoint two high commissioners for the Armenian vilayets (provinces). On January 26, 1914, Hoff and Westenenk were called upon to assume the role of commissioners.

I took a close part in the preparation of the Catholicos' appeal and I can say that this expression fully accorded with the will and the aspirations of the Armenian people, the intellectuals, and the political circles. Both the Catholicos and I realized that it would not be enough to appeal to the Tsar alone but that we should make equal representations to the European powers who likewise would participate in the conference after the Balkan war. To this end the Catholicos sent a pastoral letter to Boghos Nubar Pasha appointing him his representative to the European powers. The following is the copy of that letter:

"We, Extreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All-Armenians and Head of the Armenian Holy Apostolic Church, appoint your excellency as our representative, accompanied with a number of clergy and lay individuals, and beg thee to undertake to proceed to the

Peace Conference and present to the delegates of the European governments our memorandum in the interests of the Armenians, soliciting their intervention in behalf of the tragic condition of the Armenian people of Turkey, in the hope of perchance, through their humane and mighty mediation, as well as through their protection, bringing about a cessation of the prevalent wontonness, the destruction and the massacres, establishing peace and reforms in the land of the Armenians, and ameliorating the harrassing and tragic condition of our children."

This letter was sent to Nubar Pasha on November 10 of the same year. I vividly remember, when gathered in the Prelacy building we were working on the memorandum which a special committee brought to the Catholicos for his confirmation, we all were animated by the thought that Turkey would be obliged to accept the Armenian demands, even if it had to come through the pressure of the European powers. Nubar Pasha accepted the proposal of the Catholicos and in his letter of January 27, 1913 he served notice to all the Armenians that he cheerfully accepts the role which was offered to him. To assist him, Boghos Nubar invited Bishop Utujian, Yacoub Artin Pasha, Haroutune Maslimian and Minas Cheraz. The entire Armenian press hailed the appointment of Nubar Pasha.

This was the setting on the eve of the great war.

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To preserve the consistency of my story I should record here that in October of 1913, during a popular demonstration, I fell seriously ill and was confined in bed for six months. After my recovery I decided to go to Germany in order to become permanently cured. I had to travel via Constantinople and Vienna. In April of 1914 I took the ship from Batum for Constantinople. In Constantinople I saw Khajak who took me

to the Turkish Parliament and introduced me to Zohrab and the other Armenian delegates.

Seated in front of the window which commanded the magnificent view of the sea, we talked about various questions, no one dreaming that the great world storm was fast approaching. The two High Commissioners for the Armenian Vilayets had already arrived in Constantinople and were preparing to take over their new responsibilities. Khajak and Zohrab were not particularly sanguine about their arrival. They would say that the Turkish government could always find means of obstructing the work of foreign overseers. Nor did Zohrab have any faith in the Russians. He did not believe that the Russian government would busy itself with the cause of the Turkish Armenians and at best he thought that, should the Armenian vilayets come under the moral or political influence of the Russian government, there still would be the menace of Russification. Khajak had great faith in the creative spirit of the Armenian people. Given the setting of a peaceful development, he believed, the Armenian people under the vigilance of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation would be able to develop its language and culture.

Two days later I departed from Constantinople and it was not until after four terrible years that I again visited Constantinople, this time as a member of the Peace Delegation by virtue of my office as Foreign Minister of the Republic of Armenia. In Serbia, while I was still in the train, I felt something unusual about me. The Serbians fixed me with uneasy looks. Suddenly a dispatch announced that Crown Prince Franz Ferdinand of Austro-Hungary had been assassinated in Sarajevo by a Serbian. In all the stations I saw agitated faces. It seemed to me the event did not concern the Armenians.

I arrived in Elster where I remained for

a whole month. On July 19 it became known that Austria had declared war on Serbia. The entire population of Elster left the place, the stores and the hotels were closed up. I had to go back to Tiflis. After many incidents and complexities which would fill a book, I arrived in Tiflis by way of Rumania at the end of August. The great powers were in a state of semi-war and the German battleships Goeben and Breslau entered the Black Sea right under our eyes.

I found the mood of the people and the general situation entirely different in Caucasus. The people had come out of its inertia. There was animation everywhere. The youths were leaving for the front. Regiments were being hurried to the western front. One felt a high degree of patriotic enthusiasm on all hands, a patriotism which was not artificial, nor dictated by the government.

There were many causes which explained the sincerity of this enthusiasm. First of all, the opinion prevailed that freedom-loving France and England, as allies of the Russian government, would bring liberty and protection to the small peoples. Was it not a fact that they had come out in defense of the trampled rights of little Serbia and Belgium?

Secondly, they all thought the war would be brief after which tolerable conditions of life would resume. Thirdly, the opinion was prevalent that, as in the aftermath of all wars, Russia would take the road to reforms. For example, after the Crimean war there were the reforms of the 60's; after the Japanese war there was the constitution. And lastly, it was plain to all that the war would raise the economic productivity of the country.

To the Armenians, the war opened wide horizons. It was no secret that Turkey would enter the fray against Russia. The general belief was that she would be defeated and the Armenians would at last find

the solution to their question thanks to the intervention of Russia and the European powers. The best proof of this disposition was the memorandum of the Armenian Catholicos which he handed Count Vorontzov on August 5, 1914. In this personal appeal the Catholicos made mention of the fact that in 1912 he had asked the Russian monarch to take the interests of Turkish Armenians under his personal protection, and that during the years 1912-14 a special program of reforms had been worked out whose fate was now being jeopardized by the state of war. The Catholicos continued:

"The war is jeopardizing the reforms, as well as the safety of the Armenian people. Today when the Russian government is confronted with the contingency of straining every ounce of its energy and will power, I am happy to declare to Your Excellency that the Armenian people, silencing the ache which is within, will lay its all at the disposal of the fatherland's defence, and faithful to the King's command, is ready to fulfill its duty to the fatherland."

The Catholicos pointed out that the Sublime Porte (the Turkish government) was not carrying out the reforms, thanks to the existing conditions, that the very existence of the Armenian people was in danger, and that it was imperative to take immediate steps for their safety.

"As long as the Armenian Vilayets are under Turkish rule," the Catholicos wrote, "it is the deep conviction of myself and my people that the following conditions are a requisite for the final solution of the painful Armenian Question:

"A—The creation of a separate region out of the Armenian provinces of Anatolia.

"B—A high-ranking and well-known Christian to become the governor of the region, entirely independent of the Sublime Porte.

"C—To grant broad autonomy rights to the region with complete equality to the

Christians.

"D—To reassure the Armenian people of the permanence of the new administration, to reserve the right of supervision over the reforms to Russia."

Finally, the Catholicos urged the necessity of taking effective measures for the defense of Armenian rights and to expedite the appointment of overseers in the vilayets. The Catholicos asked the Viceroy to send his appeal to the Tsar and ask his high support and protection of the same.

I have purposely quoted at some length from the Catholicos' writing because it voiced the aspirations of the entire Armenian people which, in the event of a Russo-Turkish war, had laid great hopes in the intervention and beneficent friendship of the Tsar.

The answer was not late in coming from St. Petersburg.

The Catholicos was assured that the Armenian question was the object of the government's serious consideration. The Armenians were warned against inciting rebellion movements in Turkey in order to avoid complicating a political situation which without it was already too grave. The Armenians were asked to show their loyalty to the Tsar with their acts and to assist the Russian army in case military operations started between Russia and Turkey.

This reply synchronized with my arrival in Caucasus. Taking over, I immediately took part in all matter which pertained to the Armenian people. In my book, "The Origin and Development of the Armenian Republic", I have dealt at length on many of these questions, but there I have confined my attention strictly to matters which pertain to the Armenians. In these memoirs, as Mayor, I have approached all these questions from the Caucasian and Russian viewpoints.

The reply to the Catholicos' appeal became known to large numbers of the people.

It was the wish of all that Turkey would enter the war against Russia as the only means of solving the painful Armenian question.

The declaration of war was followed by a call to universal conscription as a result of which 200,000 Armenian soldiers enlisted in the Russian army. There were no deserters among the Armenians. On the western front, against the Germans and the Austrians, the Armenian soldier was fully the equal of his Russian compeer in point of intrepidity and valour. There was also a great number of Georgian soldiers and officers who likewise were sent to the western front. The war also conscripted the retired Armenian General Nazarbekov who later became the commander-in-chief of the Armenian armies in the days of the Independent Republic.

By enlisting in the Russian army and fighting on the western front the Armenian people fulfilled its duty. But the situation was very delicate when Turkey entered the war. Here the government demanded the Armenian people's support. The Armenian soldier was obliged to fight for the Turk. There was no self-sacrifice involved here. What could one do? There were psychological factors which during the course of years had prepared the Armenian people to participate in the fight. Before the war I had asked the well-known statesman and historian Milyukov to deliver a lecture on the Armenian Question in Tiflis. Milyukov

spoke on the Near Eastern policy of Russia, emphasizing the fact that the Armenians and the Russians are "two different chambers inside the same building." Two different chambers, meaning the *special* demands of the Armenians should be taken into account under the *general* roof.

The Georgians and the Tartars were opposed to the war. The Georgians had nothing to expect from the war, on the contrary they were afraid of the Ajarians who, although Georgians, were Mohammedans and Turcophiles. The Tartars were afraid that the war might weaken Turkey. Only the Armenians wanted war.

My own position was quite delicate. As an Armenian I fully shared the expectations of the Armenian people, but as Mayor of Georgia's capital, in Russian circles, before the Viceroy and the government I was obliged to express the wishes of the entire people. Events took such a turn that I stood solidly behind the Armenian viewpoint and for four years I took an active part in all the matters which pertained to the Armenians and the entire Caucasus, and I feel obliged to confess that I never regretted the policy which I carried.

Immediately upon my arrival in Caucasus I plunged into three principal issues: the organization of our regiments, the Armenian affairs which were intimately connected with the war, and the creation of an Armenian political center. I will speak about these in the following chapters.

(To be continued)



THINGS SEEN AND REMEMBERED

By MARDIE JAY BAKJIAN

I

It had been raining all morning, the sky sunless and the wind cold. I stood at the front window and watched the raindrops falling. They fell like delicate beads and streamed from the sidewalk to the gutter. Already the current of water in the gutter was choppy, the aggressive waves splashing up against the curb and casting upon the sidewalk bits of paper and refuse.

High up I selected a raindrop and followed its swift descent to the sidewalk; then I picked out two fat ones and studied them carefully to see which one would hit the ground first. It struck me as strange that no matter how many raindrops perished, there were always more, and I wondered if, after all, the rain was really falling, because when I stared for a while at a particular point, the raindrops seemed to be suspended in space, as if they had suddenly been caught in a vacuum.

During the afternoon the wind changed its direction. The dark clouds broke up, and the rain, bent to the wind's pull, staggered away. The sun came out warm and good. The wet street glistened, and clinging to the trees were drops of water that gleamed in the welcome sunshine.

I went out into the street. The sky overhead had been swept clean by the crisp wind, except for lumps of white clouds lingering in the distance. Far out in the west the sky glared black and stormy.

Up the street a group of boys were choosing sides to start a baseball game. They

signaled to me to join them. As I ran to play with them, I observed my father coming home. I came to a quick stop. He had given me strict orders not to play in the street. Fortunately he didn't see me. I beat him home with more than a minute to spare.

He walked into the house without a word. Absorbed in thought, he moved into the kitchen to wash up. In accordance with custom established by my father, I immediately picked up a towel and held it up ready for his use. After he had mopped his face and hands, he ordered us all into the parlor.

"I have something very important to tell you," he said in a serious voice.

My mother and sisters and I sat waiting for him to speak. He paced the floor, his hands locked behind him. He halted before me.

"Where's your cousin?" he demanded. "Where's Dick?"

I shook my head, looking to my mother for assistance.

"Dick hasn't been here all day," she answered.

"Where did he go?"

"He didn't tell me."

"Didn't you ask him?"

"I asked him," she responded. "But he wouldn't answer me. You know how he is. He's been like that ever since he came to live with us."

My father turned his gaze to the window. "Well," he remarked slowly, "you won't need to bother about Dick any more."

After a pause, he added, "I'm going away."

I'll take him along with me."

My mother was shaken a bit by his words, and she stared at him for a long moment.

In a hurt tone she said, "So you've decided to go to California after all."

He nodded. "That's what I wanted to tell you."

"When are you going?"

"In a day or two."

"Why didn't you tell me sooner?"

"I wasn't sure about going until today."

"What about us?"

"I'll send for you."

"When?"

"Time will tell."

"And how are we to live while you're gone?"

"That remains to be seen."

My mother stood up, facing him. "You'll never send for us," she said bitterly. "Go to California. We'll get along somehow without your help."

She brushed past him, going off to attend to her duties in the kitchen.

Nothing more was said about California until the next day when my father's friends dropped in to wish him good luck. They drank round after round of whiskey, having a merry time. Inspired by his friends, my father kept raving about California.

"There's a land where everybody makes money," he told them. "I have here in my pocket a letter from a friend that says so. In the letter he says that in two years he has made himself a fortune."

"Two years?" someone asked in a mocking tone.

"Yes," my father clapped his hands, "in two short years a fortune. That's what I want. There's no future in delivering ice and coal."

His friends laughed, and it seemed to me they were laughing at him.

He continued, "The soil is rich and the grapes grow as large as walnuts. I'll live like a king. Just think, no more cold weather,

friends, no more snow. Nothing but sunshine all year long. That's the life for me."

And they drank more whiskey.

"Tell me," a short fat man asked, "how much does it cost to buy a farm?"

"You mean a *good* farm?" my father said.

At this remark everybody laughed.

"Of course I mean a good farm."

"Well," my father paused for breath, "I won't know until I get there."

This answer didn't sound funny to me, but my father's friends laughed hard and long over it, laughing and slapping one another on the back and repeating his words about California.

The short fat man said, "If all goes well with you, my brother, I shall buy a farm too."

Another man said, "Keep me in mind too."

"Don't forget me," still another cried.

"When I get there," my father promised, "I'll write you all about it."

A large-nosed individual drawled, "If we don't take care, we'll all end up being farmers before the year is out."

Once again they roared with laughter.

The afternoon wore away. By nightfall, they ran out of whiskey and their hilarity died down.

"Follow me," my father shouted, and he led the mob out of the house to the saloon across the street.

The following morning my father left for California. It was a casual departure, as if he were merely going to work and would be back again the same evening. He kissed each of us goodby, picked up the suitcases and marched off, taking Dick with him.

"Let him go," my mother kept saying in a low voice, "let him go."

From the window I could see my father and Dick walking down the street. It had begun raining, and as they turned the corner out of sight, a rumble of thunder rolled across the sky.

I turned to find my mother in tears. She

sat on the couch, looking exactly nowhere. She wept softly, the tears flowing down her face and dropping like raindrops on her dress.

Another blast of thunder crashed across the sky, and it began to rain in earnest. I tried my best to watch the rain swirling with the wind, but all I could see was a blur, because my mother's sadness was mine now.

II

With my father off to California, I lived a happier life. I was as free as a bird now. I explored the city, I flew from one adventure to another. I roamed the streets, investigated almost every alley and basement and rooftop in our neighborhood, and like everybody else scoured the dumps in search of valuables, stuffing my pockets with pieces of string, safety pins, nails, buttons and glass in various colors. Once in a while I found money, and on one trip I picked up a ring with a green stone. I often whizzed down to Hoboken on borrowed skates, and one afternoon a gang of kids pounced on me like tigers and went through my pockets, relieving me of all my precious gems. Many an afternoon I ditched school to master the art of swimming in the cold waters of the Hudson River. I stole rides on trucks on the way home from school, and on Saturdays I often rode the ferry to New York and went to Coney Island.

More significant than all the fun was the realization that I no longer was afraid. If I encountered trouble in the street, I met it head on. When a boy tossed my cap over a fence, I did not cringe with fear as in the past and run home weeping; instead, I knocked the boy down. If I couldn't knock him down, I'd give him a kick in the pants. Now and then I fought a losing fight. Once I fought a tough kid from block to block for seven blocks and finally lost; but it made no difference because in the end we shook hands and became friends.

If there was fun in the street there was hunger at home. My mother looked for work in vain. It was a grim year. Sometimes we had enough to eat, sometimes we didn't. On Sundays, I remember, my mother prepared sugared bread crumbs for lunch, and when she could afford it, she made buckwheat cakes. Although there was never enough to go around, we seldom complained; and when we did, my mother would relate pitiful stories about poor people who had nothing to eat at all and who had no choice but to beg for food, going from door to door. When she didn't have a story to tell, she pacified us by promising, "Tomorrow you'll have twice as much."

She always found a way to put off misery. She had four children to feed, she had no work, and the grocer refused her further credit. Through it all, however, she remained resolute, cheerful, energetic. If she was troubled or worried, she kept it a secret, for she never ran short of laughter, she never lost hope.

Once when I told her there was nothing to eat, not even bread, she replied, "There will be."

"But when?"

"Use your head. Think. Ask yourself, 'How can I get the money to buy a loaf of bread?' When you find the answer let me know."

She put two or three potatoes in a pan of water and placed the pan on the gas stove.

I thought and thought about what she had said, but I couldn't find an answer.

"Look," she said suddenly, pointing to the gas stove, "it went out. Do you know why?"

I shook my head.

"We have to drop a quarter in the meter," she said, indicating the slot. "Otherwise, the stove won't work."

A quarter, I thought. That's a lot of money. We could buy a lot of food with a

quarter.

Then she remarked lightly, "Do you have a quarter?"

I'd never had a quarter. All I had was my good luck penny. I'd found it in the dumps a long time ago. I offered her the penny, and her smile faded. She became deadly serious.

"No," she sighed a deep sigh, "a penny won't do."

Then she added, "Do you see how it is?"

I could see, all right. It was all very clear. A lot of things were clearing up for me now. I was learning fast. As I saw it, we were on the short end of a one-sided fight. We were taking a beating, and a bad one at that.

It was a tough year. It began with a terrifying winter that threatened to exterminate us. We lived in a world of snow. The icy wind kept us indoors, and we stayed in bed to keep warm. I missed school, and for the first time I was left back.

In the spring the Lusitania was sunk. Boys in the neighborhood threw stones at Schnitzler's Bakery and broke the front window. Confusion dominated our street, because the fever of war was in the air.

III

The summer skipped by, and the following winter my father returned home from California. He was sick and disillusioned. The moment I saw him, I knew that time had created a gap between us that would always keep us apart. I faced him without fear. He was weak now, and I was strong.

When I learned his tragic story, however, my heart went out to him. I'd never before felt so sorry for anybody except my mother. He lay in bed and stared out of sunken eyes at our family picture hanging on the wall. The man in the picture was now a memory, and the man in the bed was a shadow of that memory.

My father returned home alone. He left

Dick with friends in California. My father came back a failure. California had whipped him. Crop failures had exhausted his capital. Further, one terrible afternoon he was almost burned to death. The coal oil stove exploded, the fire menacing the farmhouse. He scooped up the stove and pitched it into the yard. But in the process his clothes caught on fire. He was a mass of flames. He rolled over and over in the dirt to extinguish the fire. The smoke choked him, his head spun, and of a sudden he dropped down from what seemed to be a mountain peak, going down into oblivion. He woke up in a Fresno hospital, dazed. He was severely burned. More than that, he was shaken with fear, and so overpowering was his terror that for a time he could remember nothing of the past.

His wounds were slow in healing, and as his memory returned, he begged to be sent home. He plagued the doctors with this request.

"Once I get home," and home to him meant New Jersey, "I'll get well again," he pleaded incessantly.

"Send me home," he moaned, refusing to cooperate with the nurses. "I don't like it here. Let me go home."

The doctors decided they'd had enough of his nagging and dismissed him from the hospital. Feverish, he contracted a cold on the train. His condition became worse, and by the time he arrived at home, he was dying.

My mother contrived every means within her reach to save him, sacrificing her own health by staying up night after night to attend to his needs. He improved slowly. In a month or so he was strong enough to sit up in bed. With the approach of summer he regained his strength. He went out into the sunshine for short walks.

But his inner self was still twisted with defeat. His mind was haunted with the ugly web of persecution. He could not drive

from his mind the crushing impact of terror. He wrestled with fear. The flare of a match would frighten him. His extreme caution magnified the complex phobia burning in his mind, plunging him into pitfalls that further complicated his condition. He became a slave to suspicion, and he committed acts unrelated to his real self.

He stole some bread and milk, one afternoon, from the grocery store. He was too weak to combat hunger. The grocer, an old friend, let him go the first time. The stealing continued, the grocer pretending not to notice. My father grew bolder. He helped himself now to more expensive items. Infuriated, the grocer presented my mother with a big bill. She managed somehow to pay him off, eliminating the grave possibility of a policeman coming to our door.

When our finances struck rock bottom and my mother could not pay the grocer, our troubles increased, attracting the attention of our neighbors. The grocer naturally refused to admit my father into the store. One day, my father lost his temper and kicked over the container of milk. Another time he tried to beat up the grocer who like a grasshopper jumped this way and that, evading his blows, and finally locked himself up in the washroom.

My father's friends now turned against him. They became his enemies. They forced him into fights beyond his strength, knocking him down in the street and kicking him without mercy. In the old days my father would have flogged them like flies, but now he was too weak to defend himself.

With the end of summer he had a relapse. After a week in bed, he felt strong again. Late one afternoon, when he failed to return from his usual walk around the block, my mother sent me out looking for him. I searched the neighborhood without success.

It was growing dark when I ran into him turning a corner. He hugged me with joy, his hands trembling.

"I've lost my way home," he cried. "I've been walking and walking. I'm very tired. Come, take me home."

Lost, I thought. I was lost once, the first time I went to school and didn't know how to get back home alone. That was a long time ago. I had in fact forgotten about it. I now recalled the feeling of lostness, the long walk into the unknown, and now, as I took my father by the hand and led him home, I felt like crying. It was the saddest thing that had ever happened, my father depending on me to take him home. I couldn't imagine what had come over him.

We walked homeward down long dark streets. His breathing was labored, and he kept asking me, "How much more have we to go?"

"Only another block," I told him, hoping against hope he wouldn't collapse in the street.

I got him home at last. He went straight to bed, falling asleep at once.

For several weeks he remained in bed.

"What's happened to my strength?" he asked my mother.

"You're a sick man," she sighed. "You must stay in bed. You need rest."

"What is to become of me?" he mumbled.

"What is to become of me?"

"You'll be well soon. Try to rest."

"The children . . . how are they?"

"They're all right."

"The baby . . . bring him to me."

"The baby's asleep."

"I'm hungry."

My mother was stumped. There was no food in the house. "Sleep for an hour," she said softly. "When you waken, I'll have some food ready for you."

She procured bread and potatoes from the neighbors, and prepared a simple meal.

When my father got to his feet again, he tried to find a job. Misfortune followed him everywhere. Once again he resorted to helping himself at the grocery store. This time,

however, the grocer called on my father's onetime friends for a settlement.

Several days later, an old man brought my mother the surprising news that my father was to be arrested. They talked quietly.

"His own friends are directly responsible for this," he said. "They could help him, but they don't want to."

"Who are they?" my mother asked.

"You know who they are. They came to your house often enough. They ate your food, they drank your wine. You know who they are."

"When is it to happen?"

"This afternoon. I thought you should know."

"Why are they doing this to us?"

"They're ignorant. What can you expect from ignorant people?"

My mother sighed, "He's a sick man. Don't they know that?"

The old man rose. "God be with you," he said, and left.

My mother looked at me out of moist despairing eyes. Her hands lay motionless in her lap. She sighed deeply, and a tear rolled down her cheek. When she spoke, her voice wavered.

"Stay near me today," she said, choked with emotion. "I'll be needing you."

During the afternoon I sat in the parlor with my father, keeping him company. He talked about the old days, more to himself, it seemed, than to me.

When the police wagon pulled up in front of our house, I hurried into the kitchen to tell my mother. My father suspected nothing. Outside, a crowd gathered. It was a tense moment, but my father went on talking, rambling from one subject to another.

"You need shoes," he said suddenly, pointing to my feet with both hands, the palms turned up in a gesture of shame. "I'll have to get you new shoes right away."

There was a loud knock on the door.

"They've come," my mother said, pale and breathless.

"Who?" he asked.

She paused. "The doctor," she answered. The knock was repeated.

"You must go away," she said. "You need medical care."

"Go?" he cried, bewildered. "Where?"

"To the hospital."

His eyes opened wide. "I won't go!" he declared.

"It's only for a day or two."

"No, I won't go!"

The knocking became a pounding, and a voice ordered, "Open up!"

"You must go," my mother begged. "For my sake don't make any trouble. You need more care than I could give you. They know what is best for you. We have no money for medicine. They will make you strong, so you could work and earn money."

The police kept pounding on the door, and the force of their blows shook the wall.

"Open up!" the same voice ordered, "open up!"

My mother threw open the door.

Two policemen entered. One of them handed my mother a document, but in the confusion of the moment she didn't even look at it. She dropped the document on a chair and turned to my father who remained seated, glaring at the policemen.

"Listen to me," my mother begged, "and go with them quietly. Don't fight, please. It will do no good."

The policemen stood in the doorway. "Come along," said the voice of authority, "and don't make no trouble."

My father rose to his feet slowly. He gazed at my mother out of sad eyes. "I am going now," he said, with a gesture of surrender. "Only God knows if I shall ever come back."

With a policeman on each side, he walked through the crowd and stepped up into the

wagon. My mother wept aloud, and when the people outside heard her sobs, they looked at one another in silence and shook their heads in sympathy.

I never saw my father again. I stood on the porch and watched the wagon drive away. I listened to the clopping sounds of the horse's hoofs on the cobblestoned street and remembered the old days when I used to ride on my father's wagon: days when I lived in a comfortable dream world.

By midnight of the same day my father was dead. The moment he arrived at the police hospital, he became frantic. He tried to escape. They tried to stop him and he put up a fight. To overcome his resistance, they chained him to his bed. But it wasn't enough, because he managed to break the chains. Then they gave him shot after shot of morphine, until he lay quite still. Hours later, they discovered he was dead.

An officer appeared at our house at midnight. When my mother learned what had happened, she became as still as stone. Long after the officer had gone, she was still standing in the open doorway, staring into the blackness of the hall. I touched her hand, and she came to.

"I must go to him," she said in a strange voice. Then, as though to herself, she added, "But he's dead."

She dressed up quickly. "Look after the children," she said. "I must see for myself

what's happened. I'll be back soon."

She went out into the night. There was no moon, but the sky was clear and the stars were glimmering brightly. From the window I could see her hurrying down the street to the police hospital.

I sat in the gloomy silent house and tried to put two and two together. I couldn't believe that my father was dead. I pondered over our hard luck, unable to understand why we were constantly running into difficulties. My world of thought commenced spinning like a pinwheel, and I curled up in the chair and fell asleep.

Later, my mother wakened me.

"Better go to bed," she sighed.

"Did you see pa?" I asked.

"Yes," she answered sadly. "He's dead."

The room was filled with a heavy silence. We looked at each other for a while without saying anything.

The baby began to wail, but she didn't seem to hear him.

"It's baby," she said, forcing a peculiar laugh. "It's his birthday today and his father's dead."

A grim year it was, indeed, and after the death of my father, we moved into a cheaper flat. Our new place had but one window in the front and one in the back, dark and uncomfortable. Yet, it was home, and by the time we settled down, we were in the grip of another cruel winter.



MY ROAD

*Earth. Don't stay there,
my lonely and bewildered little seed,
but come and live in my warm arms.*

Seed. What shall I find there?

*Earth. The magic of magics:
you will transform to a lovely and beautiful flower
in a short time,
and the people will admire you.*

Seed. What will my name be in your house?

*Earth. You will be my bride in the day-time,
majestic robes will adorn your young body,
thousands of voices will glorify your beauty,
and the visitors will come
to bow at your feet.*

*Seed. And when the visitors are gone,
how shall we pass the evenings?*

*Earth. Together we will have our meditative moments,
and in that silence,
the moon will rise to shine on your beautiful face
and the stars, like a crown,
will sparkle on your forehead.*

Seed. What will the result of our union be?

*Earth. You and I will be friends,
and the same time
we will weave wreaths of exotic flowers
to offer them to the altar of Our Good Mother . . .*

—NUVER KOUMYAN

WAZIRIC DYNASTY OF BADR AL-JAMALI, THE ARMENIAN, DURING THE FATIMID CALIPHATE

Part II

Part I in Vol. II, No. 3-7 AR (issue Autumn 1949)

By H. KURDIAN

Maqrizi informs us that Badr departed from Tyre for Egypt in December, however he forgets to give us the year. "For forty days" Badr and his small armada "had clear weather and gentle breezes" with which to navigate to their destination. And yet, according to Maqrizi, "Badr arrived (in Tinnis and Damietta, Egypt), in the year 465 of Hejira, two nights before the end of the month of Jamada, Wednesday evening."

465 of Hejira Jamada Ulay 28 thus establishes the date of the landing of Badr in Egypt. It so happens that 465 of Hejira was a leap year and started with September 17, 1072 A. D. Adding Jamada Ulay 28, we arrive at 1073 A. D., February 7th, which is the date given by Maqrizi for Badr's landing in Egypt.

Maqrizi has stated that Badr departed from Tyre in the month of December. Forty days after his departure he arrived in Tinnis and Damietta in 465 of the Hejira Jamada Ulay 28, which, as we have seen, brings us to February 7, 1073. If we deduct the 40 days from this date, we determine the date of Badr's departure from Tyre which was December 30, 1072 A. D. However, Ibn Khallikan claims that the date of Badr's arrival was 466 of the Hejira Jamada Ulay 28, or January 29, 1074 A. D. Prof. K. Hitti

accepts the date 1073, while other authorities think 1074 is the correct date.

The minute he took control of the government, Badr took drastic measures to bring Egypt out of the deplorable and chaotic state it was in. For this service he was rewarded with the highest honors Egypt could lavish upon him. He had bestowed upon him the titles of Amir al-Juyush, Chief Quadi, and Chief Da'i.

Maqrizi states that "he relentlessly pursued the evil-doers and put them all to death." Even his son Ahvad, who with some confederates had revolted against the authority of his father in Alexandria, was captured by him and put to death.

Maqrizi and Ibn Khallikan agree that Badr was 80, or over, when he died. Maqrizi gives March or April, 1094, and Ibn Khallikan November or December, 1095 A. D. as the date of Badr's death. Maqrizi gives the following epilogue on the life and work of Badr: "He exercised the authority of a king in Egypt. In his presence Caliph Al-Mustansir (1035-1095) had no authority. He ruled independently and directed the affairs of state in the best way. Severely venerable, greatly respected and formidable, he killed so many men in Egypt that God alone knows the number. Indeed, in addition to

those he killed in the cities of Damietta, Alexandria, Kharibah, Sharqiya, Upper Egypt, Awan, Cairo and Misir, he killed about 20,000 of the population of Buhayrah. At the same time he repopulated the land which had been despoiled and destroyed by local brigands. The day of his death he was 80 years old.

"He benefited the country. For three years he granted the land to the farmers who got rich in his day and improved their condition. Also, due to his great passion for justice, the merchants who had departed during the famine returned to Egypt. He was the first Wazir of the Sword who took under his control the Caliphs of Egypt. In Cairo, among his monuments are: Bab al-Zawiyah, Bal al-Futuh, and Bab al-Nasr gates."

Prof. Philip K. Hitti writes:

"The prosperity which the country (Egypt) enjoyed under the first two caliphs in Cairo, and later under the two vizirs of Armenian origin (Badr and his son Ahvad), a prosperity worthy of the Pharaonic or Alexandrian age, was reflected in the sphere of art."

Badr, his successors, and the Armenian colony of Egypt made substantial contributions to the architecture and the allied arts of Egypt. "The practice of associating a tomb, usually of the founder, with a mosque began in 1085 with Badr al-Jamali, whose tomb-mosque on the Muqattam set the first example." Prof. Hitti assures us that "the triumph of stone over brick as a structural material was not affected until the late Fatimid age and is illustrated in the facade of the al-Aqmar Mosque, built in 1125."

"Of the great gates that testify to the grandeur of Fatimid buildings," continues Prof. Hitti, "three are extant: Bab Zawilah, Bab al-Nasr, and Bab al-Futuh. These massive gates of Cairo, built by Edessene archi-

tecs on a Byzantine plan, are among the most enduring relics of Fatimid Egypt." (*History of Arabs*, p. 630).

In all probability the Edessene architects referred to above were the Armenian compatriots of Badr himself who built the aforesaid gates. As it is, Badr emerges as a great ruler, a capable commander, a devoted patron of the arts, and a lover of justice. De Lacy O'Leary assures us that Badr was also an economist. "Under his rule the annual revenue of the state rose from 2,000,000 dinars to 3,100,000, and peace and prosperity reigned in all the land of Egypt." (The Fatimid Khalifate, p. 208).

Badr al-Jamali indeed was a great man. He protected and helped the Armenians of Egypt in return for which he received their full-hearted loyalty. He received and entertained the great Armenian ecclesiastic Grigoris Vkeyaser sometime in 1074 or 1075 A. D. in Alexandria. Even an old legend insists that he was buried in an Armenian church.

* * *

**AL-MALIK AL-AFDAL ABU-AL-
QUASIM SHAHINSHAH BIN AMIR
AL-JUYUSH BADR
(Al Armany)**

Al-Afdal was the worthy son of his great father Badr al-Jamali. He was born in 1066 A. D. in Tyre when his father still was governor of that city. Thus, when his father landed in Egypt in 1073, Afdal was about 17 years old. Before his death, during the last few months of his life, due to his advanced age and resultant physical infirmities, Badr had turned over the government of Egypt to his son Afdal. It is about this very Afdal that the famous Italian poet Torquato Tass (1544-1595) wrote in his masterpiece "Jerusalem Delivered" the following tribute:

"The commander was an Armenian prince who passed,
When he was a child yet, from the Holy Faith to Islam,
First he was known as Clemens, and now is named Amir,
Beloved and loyal to the Caliph,
Without another in the army like him
He is commander and grand warrior
With his sword, his brain, and strength of his arm."

Is it really true that Afdal, like his father, was born a Christian, that his name was Clemens or its equivalent, or has Tasso just given vent to his imagination? It is difficult to say because we have no other corroborative information. Soon after his accession to the throne of Egypt, Afdal's father died, followed soon after by Caliph Mustansir. Bypassing Mustansir's eldest son and heir apparent Nizar bin al-Mustansir, Afdal put on the throne of Egypt his younger brother al-Mustali. Maqrizi gives the following details in regard to this succession:

"When the Caliph Mustansir Billah died in the year of Hejira 487 Zu-1- Hijja 18, the night of Thursday (Dec. 28, 1094 A. D.), Afdal Bin Amir al-Juyush Badr al-Jamali rushed to the palace, installed Mustansir's son Ab'ul Quasim Ahmed on his father's throne, and changed his name to Mustali Billah. Then he called the sons of Mustansir, the princes Nizar, Abdullah and Ismail, who upon their arrival saw their younger brother Ahmed was seated on the throne. They were both angry and sad for this deed. Afdal ordered them to kiss the ground, saying:

"Kiss the ground before our Lord Mustali Billah and recognize him as the Caliph."

"They refused and each of them stated that their father had promised them the caliphate. Nizar said: 'Even if I am cut to pieces, I will not recognize a younger brother as Caliph as long as I have my father's writing that I shall be his heir. I will go bring the document.' Saying it, he hurried off to bring the document. He went to Alexandria unobserved, but when he did not return Afdal sent a messenger to bring the writing. The messenger could not find Nizar

whereupon Afdal became very angry.

"Nizar hated Afdal for various reasons. One day as he was coming out of the palace gate, Afdal, mounted on a horse, was just entering in. 'Infidel Armenian,' shouted Nizar at him, 'dismount from your horse.' Whereupon Afdal held a grudge against him and they hated each other. Another reason was that Afdal always opposed Nizar in the days of his father al-Mustansir, ignored him, and cut his allowance and the number of his retinue, and tortured his bodyguards. For all these, when Mustansir died, Afdal was afraid of Nizar who was an elderly man and had many followers and partisans. Thus, Afdal promoted Mustansir's son Ahmed, after he had conferred with the amirs and had constantly warned them against Nizar until they agreed to keep away from him. However, one of these men who was named Mahoud Bin Massal, secretly sent word to Nizar, informing of the plot which Afdal was hatching up with the amirs in order to put Ahmed on the throne. So Nizar and Massal were prepared to leave for Alexandria, and when Nizar left Afdal to fetch his father's writing, he emerged from the palace in disguise and accompanied by Ibn Massal hastened to Alexandria where resided Amir Nasraddavla Efdikin, one of the mameluks of Amir al-Juyush Badr al-Jamali.

"They presented themselves to Efdikin at night, told him of Afdal's plot, and threw themselves at his feet. Nizar promised to make him wazir in place of Afdal. Efdikin received them well, recognized Nizar as the lawful Caliph, and won over the population of the maritime city. They accepted Nizar as their lawful Caliph who took the surname of Mustafa Lidinillah. When Afdal heard about this, he prepared to make war against them. In 488 of the Hejira, the last days of Muharram (March 31, 1095 A. D.), he advanced on Alexandria at the head of his army. Nizar and Efdikin gave him battle.

It was a bitterly fought battle in which Afdal was defeated and fled to Cairo. Nizar and Efdikin became stronger and their ranks were increased by many Arab volunteers. The authority of Nizar became greater and he occupied all the cities of Lower Egypt.

"Afdal set himself for a second clash with Nizar. He sent crack spies to Alexandria to observe the movements of Arab chieftains and the leaders of Nizar's and Efdikin's followers. Then Afdal descended upon Alexandria, laid a strong siege to the city, and furiously pressed the attack. He sent representatives to Nizar's leaders with attractive promises. In the month of Zu-l-Qa'da (November), at the height of the distress inside the city, Ibn Massal suddenly gathered his wealth and escaped to Maghrib by sea. This weakened the position of Nizar whose defeat became obvious. By the same token Afdal's position became stronger and many rallied to his cause. Finally, Nizar and Efdikin sent word to Afdal that they were ready to capitulate provided they were guaranteed their safety of person. Afdal promised, entered Alexandria, captured Nizar and Efdikin and sent them to Cairo. Nizar was killed in the castle. As to Efdikin, Afdal killed him after his return from Alexandria."

Caliph Mustali died six years later, in 1101 A. D.

Efdikin, Nizar's partner in the civil war, was an Armenian and a former servant of Afdal's father Badr al-Jamali. This incidence seems to have lent a sort of anti-Armenian color to the civil war, an assumption borne out by a number of anecdotes narrated by Maqrizi.

"When Mustansir's son Nizar and the Armenian Nasraddavla Efdikin, one of the mameluks of Amir al-Juyush Badr, were besieged in Alexandria by Afdal, the latter's mother, a clever and venerable old woman, daily made a tour of the city's inns, the bazaars, and on Fridays the mosques, gath-

ering information and spying upon her son's friends and enemies. Aftih had heard about this woman. One Friday she came to Sheik Aftih's Mosque and said to him: 'My Lord, my son is in the army of Afdal. Let God take what is due to me from him (Afdal), for I am worried about my son. Pray to God that He preserve my son.'

"The Sheik answered as follows: 'Creature of God, are you not ashamed to curse him who is the ascendancy of God on earth? Who is fighting for the Lord's faith? The most High will assist him (Afdal), and will protect him, as well as your son. He, God willing, will gain the victory, he will find conservation and success. When you talk of him, he already has conquered Alexandria, has captured his enemies, and has executed a most excellent and most beautiful plan. Do not worry then, because by the will of Almighty God, good only will happen.'

"The old woman then went to the saddle makers' market in Cairo and met al-Far Sayrif. She stood in front of the money changer (Far) to change a dinar and to hear what was said, because he (Far) was a rabid Ishmaelite. The old woman said to him: 'My son is with Afdal and I do not know what has happened to him.'

"Far, who did not recognize the woman, said to her: 'God's curse be upon that son of an evil slave, that Armenian dog who has gone to fight against his Lord and people's Lord. O old woman, by the will of Almighty God you will see his head stuck on a lance, passing right through here, in front of his master Nizar and my master Nasraddavla. God will preserve your son. Who told you to send your son to that hypocrite dog?'

Next, the old woman was standing before Ibn Papa of Aleppo, a clothes merchant in the bazaar of Cairo. She told him the same story which she had told the money changer Far and received the same answer.

When Afdal captured Alexandria and arrested Nizar and Nasraddavla, his mother

related to him her experiences and said to him, 'If you have another father, after Amir al-Juyush, he is none other than the Sheik Atfih.'

"Caliph Mustali invested Afdal with a robe of honor called Khila in the latter's castle then returned to his palace in Cairo. One day, when Afdal was passing through the bazaar of clothes merchants, he saw Ibn Papa of Aleppo, and stopping his retinue, he ordered them to go and bring him his head. Ibn Papa was beheaded in front of his shop. Then Afdal ordered Abt Ali, one of the leaders of his retinue, to stand guard at the shop so nothing would be lost until the arrival of the relatives of the deceased man. He next came to a stop in front of the money changer Far's shop and ordered him beheaded. He ordered Musuf al-Askari, another leader of his retinue to stand guard at the place until the arrival of the deceased man's relatives so nothing would be lost. 'Be careful,' he said, 'that you don't touch his cash box. If a single dirham of his money is missing, I will behead you too. We had an enemy whom we punished and we executed him as a warning to others. We do not need his money nor the poverty of his family.' Then Afdal went to Sheik Abu Tahir Atfih and rewarded him for his fidelity by making him one of his favorites."

These anecdotes, whether true or pure fabrications, as was customary in those days in regard to illustrious men, are interesting all the same as a reflection on the character of the man involved. In these anecdotes Afdal is represented as a ruthless, but just man. We also note in them a remote echo of antipathy toward the Armenians, engendered no doubt from jealousy. This jealousy obviously had cropped up during the civil wars of that period. As a matter of fact there was a party known by the name of al-Jamali, which obviously came into existence with the arrival of Badr al-Jamali

in Egypt. Undoubtedly, all the Armenians of Egypt belonged to this party.

Maqrizi says Afdal was "Almighty and trustworthy Lord, Commander of the Armies, sword of Islam, protector of creatures, guardian of the Mohamedan Quades and guide of the preachers of the believers (Islam)."

In the face of these historical testimonies, there can be no doubt that Badr and his son Afdal had accepted the Islam religion. However, the persistent remarks about their Armenian origin must have been a constant reminder of their true birth. At all events, it is a comforting thought that they accepted Islam only to be able to head the greatest Islamic state of the times. Eventually, some of the succeeding Armenian Wazirs did not find it necessary to change their Christian religion in order to retain their high posts in Egypt. Badr, as well as Afdal, must have been close to their Armenian supporters and their loyal Armenian troops. They must have given frequent indications of at least being partly Armenians in order to endear themselves to their kinsmen and to win their wholehearted support in those days of uncertainty and constant turmoil. Perhaps they even spoke in Armenian to their Armenian subordinates for reasons of secrecy, so the Arabs and other nationals would not understand them, as well as for the sake of pleasing the Armenians.

Admittedly, the entire economic, political, and military history of the Armenian colony in Egypt from the 11th to the 14th centuries is dark to us. That they had a history of their own is evident from the passing notes of Arab historians. They must have had a fully developed economic and cultural life, as evident from their many ancient churches, some of which are still extant in Egypt. No doubt many manuscripts were copied by Armenian scribes. No doubt some Armenian wrote a history of this powerfully and highly flourishing colony. Unfortunately, nothing of

these documents have come down to us. Only an inscription or two in Armenian, with some murals in some ancient Armenian churches, and some remarks in Arabic historical literature. A note or two, almost worthless, in contemporary Armenian history. Very few details in some colophons written cryptically here and there in some Armenian manuscripts. But most assuredly that could not be all from the glorious era of Badr, Afdal, Bahram and other illustrious Armenians in the service of Fatimid Egypt.

There is no doubt that the Armenians contributed to the splendid Egyptian architecture. They must have contributed to the textile arts in general, as well as the metallic arts (gold, silver, and copper). In those days Egypt was a paradise of skilled dyers, weavers, gold, silver and copper smiths,

delicate stone masons, and in all these arts the Armenians of the Near East in those days, as well as today, were and are second to none. The wealth of Egypt in the days of the Armenian Wazirs was unsurpassed in the history of the country.

Indeed, the Armenians served Egypt well, what with their Wazirs, artisans, troops and merchants. They gave Egypt the only woman ruler the Moslem Near East and North Africa had — a brilliant, strong capable woman who established the Mameluk Dynasty in Egypt. This renowned Sultaneh of Egypt was none other than Shajar-al-Durr, the widow of al-Salih the Ayyubid who died in 1249. Shajar-al-Durr was of Armenian origin.

(To be continued)



THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF ERIVAN

(On the occasion of its Thirtieth anniversary)

By S. NAYIRI

30 years ago, on January 31, 1920, in opening the State University of Armenia in Alexandropol, the late Nicol Aghbalian, then Minister of Education of the independent Armenian Republic, said: "The torch which we are lighting today on the Armenian plateau will never be extinguished; it will illuminate the Near East."

It was not long before the rays of the new torch were seeping through even beyond the borders of the Near East. The government of the Republic of Armenia succeeded in rallying an imposing number of distinguished scientists, both Armenian and alien, who willingly assumed the responsibility of educating the young generation. But the university scarcely had wound up the first year when the Bolsheviks, in agreement with the Turks, invaded the country, divided it between themselves, and among other things took over the new university.

From that day on, the teaching of the sciences became the exclusive monopoly of the Soviet, the university was swathed in a red shirt, the teaching of the Armenian national heroic past was prohibited, not even excluding the narrow limits of specialized sciences, the spirit of initiative was killed by the strictures of Marx-Leninian "world outlook," and the seeds of distrust was sown between the students and the professors.

In spite of these persecutions the succeeding professors continued the old line of their

predecessors in the emphasis and the exaltation of the Armenian with new vigor and skillful concealment. However, the task was not easy, nor was it accomplished peacefully. The Armenian people inwardly boiling with indignation and at heart united with the rebellious exponents of its will, was both an eye-witness and at times a participant of the grim struggle which was going on within the walls of the university and where numerous chosen sons of Armenia were swelling the list of the casualties. Despite all this, thanks to the self-sacrificing sons of Armenia, today the State University of Armenia possesses magnificent buildings equipped with all the specialized departments, with scientific faculties of the highest order, select monographs, rich libraries and laboratories, and with faculties which vie with the best of the world's higher educational institutions which serve a populous student body. These faculties continue to work tirelessly although they are never sure that their activity will be lasting. The University not only turns out teachers for the higher schools of Armenia (9 institutes), but noted representatives in all the republics of the Soviet Union.

Let us see now under what conditions the University of Armenia operates. The University is directly responsible to the Soviet Politburo through two channels: (a) The Supreme bodies of Armenia (The Central

Committee of the Communist Party, and the ministry of education), and (b) The Administration of Higher Schools adjacent to the Soviet Central Committee. It is accountable in all matters both to the one and the other. This duality is the result of the Politburo's suspicion toward all the executive bodies of national republics. It applies equally to all the publications of the university. For example, a scientific work is published both in the native Armenian and the Russian languages. In many instances, after the Russian translation of an Armenian original has been published, the printing of the original is postponed for months or is never published.

No book dealing with the natural resources of Armenia is ever published in the Armenian language. The most that is done is a pitiful review, delineating the broad outlines which appears in the local newspapers of Erivan. The rich studies pertaining to the agronomy and botany of Armenia are published not in the Armenian but the Russian language. Professor Mahakian's protests in this respect passed unnoticed.

In such an atmosphere of dissimulation there came to the fore a group of specialists who, although well-versed in the Armenian language, began to write and speak everything in Russian. When asked why they did not write in Armenian their answer was: "Why should we write in Armenian? We write in Russian so that corresponding specialist and responsible authorities in Moscow will read our writings, first to become advised of what is going on in Armenia, and second, that they may recognize and appreciate our work."

There are even those who will say: "The Armenian language has no rich scientific vocabulary therefore we are reluctant to write in Armenian."

The artificial obstacles which the Soviet government has raised in the matter of scientific works not only have reflected on the

advancement of the university but they have produced mass discontent among the Armenian people. In other words, the University of Erivan is only carrying out the word of Politburo member Anastas Mikoyan that "He who does not know Russian cannot be a cultured man."

This terror spread by the Politburo was the result of Prof. Sheshtakov's theory that "The Kingdom of Van is not Armenian" and that Urartu is the fatherland of the Georgians and not the Armenians. The theory was of course designed to please Stalin.

It should be stated that the specialized departments of the university such as mechanics, physics, chemistry, geometry, trigonometry, cosmology, astronomy, construction and medicine are comparatively high in quality.

In these departments the professors and the students are comparatively free. They have to do with definite scientific laws which brook no danger of any deviation. The Bolsheviks have not yet succeeded in refuting the Newtonian law although they have desperately been trying to subject science to their ideological line. The historico-philosophical and philological departments have been the chief targets of political persecutions and restrictions. It is natural therefore that the greatest number of human casualties were harvested from these twin fields.

In these departments if any one either in writing or in oral explanation, deviates in the slightest from the prescribed "party line," he is instantly marked as a candidate for liquidation. Writing or speaking is permissible provided no views contradictory to Leninism or Stalinism are expressed but on the contrary are corroborative of their absolute truth. Such scientific studies are not published at once but are revised and purged for years until they are in absolute conformity with the Bolshevik party line.

Under the Bolshevik terror the professors and lecturers of Armenian history and literature were at a loss to know how to character-

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ize a certain period of history, this or that national leader, king, or commander-in-chief. Oftentimes the professors declined to answer the students' questions arguing that "on that particular question they have not yet received the final sanction or the permission of the Central Committee."

Even panegyrics directed at Stalin or the Soviet government can often revert to the detriment of the avid devotee. Thus, for example, in 1935, in a joint meeting of the university students and faculty, Tigran Vanian, a lecturer of history, declared: "The bourgeoisie era gave Napoleon, but the Proletarian era gave the Great Stalin." This was enough for the lackeys of Stalin instantly to pounce on Vanian with a view to strengthening their position in the party, saying: "How can you compare the greatness of Stalin with a pitiful Napoleon?" For this innocent comparison young Vanian was liquidated.

Another example. During a recess hour philology professor H. K. had asked a student to analyze the sentence: "Red army, march onward!" For days they criticized the poor professor arguing that the Red Army is not a conquering army like the capitalist armies; it cannot march onward to occupy other countries. The frightened professor kept pleading in the assembly: "My dear ones, you must understand me. Whether the Red Army has a right to march onward or to retreat was farthest from my aim; my aim was simply to analyze a given sentence."

Professor V. A. hastened to the aid of Prof. H. K. pleading with the students: "Let's call it a day and go to sleep. These senseless meetings are wearing us down. That's the reason why we are not worth the foot of an Englishman." That was as far as he could go. He too was censured for scorning the Soviet meetings. Both professors were expelled from the university. Under the circumstances, it was natural that the historico-philological department of the

university could not put out a great number of well-equipped graduates.

Until 1941, in this powerful ideological struggle which was pestering the university, three intellectual aggregations came to the fore, depending on their respective attitudes. Those who belonged to the first group, having boldly dared death itself, continued the fight openly or furtively, either in writing or in word, constantly arousing the Armenian people to the idea of national freedom. Under the auspices of Aghassi Khanjian, Yeghishe Charentz and Nersik Stepanian a new set of Armenia's maps were prepared and distributed among the students without the knowledge of Moscow as texts in all the higher schools of Armenia. These maps were short lived but very fruitful. Minister of Education Commissar Nersik Stepanian in his lectures at the university would often chafe: "Haiastan, Karastan, (Armenia, a rock pile.) They have reduced Armenia to a rock pile."

Haikaz Aslanian, a history professor, in one of his lectures on ancient Greek history and philosophy laid a great emphasis on David the Invincible, the philosopher of Armenian birth, for which grievous error he was accused of nationalism and was liquidated. Prof. H. N. an authority on Armenian history, was liquidated because in his lectures he had developed the idea that the history of Armenia was the most tragic not only as compared with the histories of the other peoples of the Soviet Union but as compared with all the peoples of the world.

The young talented critic Norayr Dabaghian had said: "In the history of its literature and culture the Armenian people has created such gems the equal of which is not found among other peoples." For this, he was characterized as a rabid nationalist, and having been ranked with the enemies of Armenia, he was liquidated.

This was the treatment which the Bolsheviks dealt to the first group. The second

group held a passive attitude toward all matters which pertained to the Soviet. Not sure of itself, it never initiated an active fight against Bolshevism, but on the other hand it did not concede that the ruling regime would be permanent. Deeming the general atmosphere vitiated, this group found shelter in Soviet institutes where it served with abject slavishness, carrying out the Soviet orders to the letter, thus killing time just so it could eke out a living. This group did not produce a single volume, but restricted itself to euphonious oral statements. The Poet

Yeghishe Charentz ruthlessly castigated this group for its cringing conformity. His famous ironic lines dedicated to philosopher, historian, writer and philologist Haik Giuli-keokhlian, the leader of this group, is still remembered by many:

"Here rests (the name . . .) the great critic of Nayiri
Who lived long but heroically wrote nothing.
Bow thy head, O passer by, before this stone,
Here lies the genius of Nayiri, twice dead."

The third intellectual group, the so-called dung, deprived of all self-respect, turned into abject slaves of Bolshevism in Armenia.

GOOD-NIGHT

Seed. Let it be so.

I read you Blake and Housman in the night.

I read them softly, reading to a child,

Choosing the quiet pieces with delight,

A drop of Keats, a touch of Oscar Wilde.

With every song, with every breath I took,

I gathered in the olive from the vine,

The attar from the rose; and gently shook

The attar and the olive in the wine.

I saw you drink and turn the wine to rust.

A tiger stood where stood a little faun.

I watched you break the vine and throw the crust

Upon the floor. You laughed, the child was gone

Into the tiger in the orange glow,

Waiting in silence for the night to go.

—DIANA DER HOVANESSIAN

RECENT NEWS FROM SOVIET ARMENIA

By HERANT ERMOYAN

The Purging of Academicians

Sometime toward the middle of 1949 (it is impossible to determine the exact date because Soviet papers generally are vague in their reportage of the details of distasteful events) there took place in Erivan, the capital of Armenia, a joint session of the Department of Science of the Academy of Armenia and the faculties of history and philosophy of the University of Armenia devoted to an examination of these branches presumably by the Central Committee of Armenia, but in reality at the dictate of, or as a repercussion of, the general policy of Moscow to purge the literary deviationists. The report, or the key speech to be precise, was delivered by A. Hovhanessian, Deputy Superintendent of the University Liberal Arts and Director of the Historical Institute since 1938, in which a number of distinguished Armenian Academicians were brought to task for having deviated from historico-philosophical line which had been mapped out by Academician Marr in contradiction with the so-called capitalistic theory of these sciences.

The first to be dragged over the coals was the famous academician Prof. Hratchya Ajarian. The list of complaints against him was imposing. The Central Committee of Armenia accused him of: having committed serious errors in the development of philological science; that he has repudiated the "anti-historical theory"; that he has followed the line of "evolutionary development" and has renounced "the philological revolution";

that he has distorted the "history of the development of languages"; and lastly, that not only he has not adhered to the linguistic theory of N. Marr, but "having entrenched himself on the ramparts of Indo-European philology" he has defended "reactionary and anti-historical views", and having applied "the principles of bourgeois philosophy" he has attempted to besmirch the teachings of Academician Marr.

The second important man to be accused was Academician Grigor Ghabantzian by whose name, as well as Prof. Ajarian, the members of the Central Committee and other Armenian communists swore until recently. Only a short while ago, Prof. A. Abrahamian, in his article entitled "Marr and Armenology", ranked him with A. Gharibian, Prof. Piotrosky and others, all of whom were followers of Marr and creators of the new school of Armenology. Grigor Ghabantzian is now accused as a fraudulent person who together with his accomplices V. Arakial and M. Israelian are attempting to conceal their anti-Marr activities under the tumult of "creating a new Marxist philology." He has tumbled down into the positions of "reactionary bourgeois idealistic philology", has "maliciously attacked Marr's teachings," and "has crawled at the feet of such reactionary and bourgeois philologists as Maiyen, Sebir, Soseur and others."

On the second rank of the accused are A. Gharibian, K. Sevak and others who have directed the Linguistic Institute of the

Academy of Sciences and who have held a "reconciliatory and liberal attitude toward the principal accused persons." By this it is meant that "they have not waged an idealistic Bolshevik fight against professors Ajarian and Ghapantzian's dangerous conceptions but have tried to reconcile Marr's teachings with those false scientific theories.

The continuation of the session was conducted in the classical manner which was practiced in other Soviet republics. The verdict of the Central Committee on the accused has been final and irrevocable; the accused (such as Prof. Ajarian) have not been present, or those who were present (such as Ghapantzian) have been deprived of the right to publicly state their views. As against this, ample opportunity has been given to the second class accused, especially the speech of A. Gharibian who "decisively repudiated his reconciliatory attitude," crawled at the feet of the Central Committee, and succeeded in retaining his position by viciously attacking his teacher Prof. Ajarian and his senior colleague Grigor Ghapantzian.

The other "scientists" exempt from charges have celebrated their miraculous escape by blasting away, right and left, at their teacher Prof. Ajarian and their senior colleague Grigor Ghapantzian. The session was ended by a climacteric speech by Hovhanness Mamikonian, Director of the department of propaganda and agitation of the Central Committee, summarizing all that had been said by the others, and with the following profitable observation for the future progress of philology. "The Armenian philologists," Mamikonian laid down, "must never create any theories of their own. They must continue the line laid down by Marr and must keep up the fight for the integrity of his teachings."

All this is gathered from reports in Sovetakan Hayastan, official organ of Soviet Armenia, after the event had taken place. Prior to the sessions, that paper had written

that one of those days the Central Committee has, or will (the expression is vague) of its own initiative or independently, subject to a thorough examination the philological situation and will pass a comprehensive resolution in regard to it. The comprehensive resolution was never published nor was it announced when the Central Committee's session took place. Only after the report published in July 20th, 1949 issue of Sovetakan Hayastan could it be surmized that the expression "one of those days" referred to a few days before July 20th when the session actually took place or must have taken place.

That the session which purged Prof. Ajarian and his compeers was initiated by the Central Committee of Soviet Armenia is however exceedingly doubtful if not positively untrue. It is inconceivable that any civic or educational body in Armenia has such authority or can dare to initiate such a grave action without the knowledge or the explicit order of Moscow. Professors Ajarian and Ghapantzian have been unmolested in their labors ever since the sovietization of Armenia in 1920. The latter had always been regarded as one of the most loyal pupils and followers of Marr. Both their works had been hailed by Z. Grigorian (at present Secretary of the Central Committee) as "exceedingly valuable and noteworthy." In his report to the convention of the Communist Party of Soviet Armenia in 1948, in enumerating the "deviationist" scientists, Grigor Haroutunian, executive secretary of the party, did not even mention the names of Ajarian and Ghapantzian. How come all of a sudden they were found to be deviationists? The idea is absurd. The Communist Party of Armenia was not the initiator of this sad story. It is not independent enough to exercise such authority. The real origin of this sad affair must be sought in Moscow the center of the Soviet Union. This is how it began.

On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the death of Academician Marr, in the April 6th issue of the *Literaturnaya Gazetta* of Moscow there appeared two articles signed by Marr's pupil Academician E. Meschaninov and Doctor of Philosophy K. Serdivchenko. In the first article Meschaninov wrote that "Marr decisively cut off his ties with the bourgeoisie traditions and the ideological line of philological science and created an entirely new science based on materialism and the Marx-Leninian methodology as expressed in the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin." The article was an attack on the Indo-European theory of languages, exposing its reactionary essence. Incidentally, it should be mentioned here that the speeches of Hovhannesian, Aghayan and Mamikonian read in the above mentioned session of the Central Committee of Armenia which purged Ajarian and Ghapantzian were literal reproductions of this article.

The author of the second article relates how N. Marr entered the ranks of the communist party during the reign of the Bolsheviks and his declaration before the 16th party congress as to how he, "having discovered the falsity of a-politism, had brushed it aside," that he had finally realized that "science must be based on the party (partisan)," that through the process of self-criticism he had renounced his former views and "had built an entirely new science which was based on dialectical and historico-materialistic foundations." The author of the article then goes on to warn that there are many in the Soviet Union who have been deviating from this teaching who should be exposed and ruthlessly crushed. And finally he gives a list of Russian philologists who in his opinion are deviationists.

When the copy of *Literaturnaya Gazetta* reached Erivan the members of the Central Committee were panic-stricken. It was realized that they should take immediate

action, before it was too late, in order to preserve "the ideological integrity and consistency within the realm of philology." So the Committee at once set to work (delay was tantamount to signing their doom) and hastily called a session (undoubtedly the very next day after receiving the *Moscow Gazette*) in which it gave its "comprehensive decision" in regard to Ajarian, Ghapantzian and the others. In this purge Prof. A. Derderian, another suspect who was subjected to the inquisition, emerged comparatively unscathed.

Atomgrad? Or Sevanshin?

Some time ago a number of western papers — *New York Times* and *Figaro* in particular — announced that the No. 1 Atomgrad is located in Armenia. They claimed that their information was obtained from "reliable sources". According to this report the place was the Valley of Zangou (the maps and the exact location of the atomgrad were printed), consisting of four great plants situated in Kanaker, Kiumush, Akhti and Sanshikay villages whose population had been transferred elsewhere. In this connection the area between Kanaker and Mount Arakadz was declared a forbidden zone. 70,000 workers, 15,000 of whom are scientists and engineers, wrote the correspondent of *Figaro*, are feverishly at work on the atom bomb.

Why did the Politburo select Armenia as the site of the atomgrad? Because, write these papers, there is plenty of electricity in that region. According to the testimony of the *New York Times* correspondent, ever since 1932, a hydro-electric station of 300,000 kilowatt power has been in operation in the Zangou Valley. At first, writes the correspondent of *Figaro*, the Politburo had in mind more distant regions such as Siberia, but finally, for certain technical reasons, it gave the preference to Armenia. It would have taken a long time to materialize the electri-

fication of atomic plants in Siberia whereas Armenia was loaded with electricity, etc., etc.

This information, with all its concomittant details, prove only the error of these correspondents. As the proverb goes, "they have heard the sound, but they do not know where it came from." One who has a passing acquaintance with the topography and the economic conditions of Soviet Armenia will readily see the egregious errors of these reports as well as the causes which engendered this error.

Take for example Sanshikay. There is no village in Armenia by that name but there is a thing called Sevan Construction which abbreviated reads Sevanshin and not Sanshin. As to Kay, the reference no doubt is to "Kes" which again is the abbreviation of the Russian "Kitro Electriceskaya Sdantzia" meaning hydro-electric station. The atomgrad underground caves after the digging of 500,000 cubic meters of rock no doubt has reference to the underground hydro-electric station of Lake Sevan which still is under construction.

The chief reason why atomgrad was made in Armenia and not in Siberia, says the correspondent, is because Armenia has plenty of electricity as seen by a single station which ever since 1932 has been producing 300,000 kilowatts of electric power. The date 1932 refers to the second hydro-electric station of Erivan, but the 300,000 kilowatts which even some Armenian newspapers have gobbled as true is only a plan on paper and refers to Sevanshin (The Sevan Falls) which, although started, will take years to complete.

So much for the legend of the atomgrad in Armenia. Let us now say a few words about Sevanshin (Sevan Construction) which gave rise to the legend. The Sevan-Zangou plan, or the problem, as they call it in Armenia, is a long story and much has been said about it in the Armenian press,

especially the Haireniks. In brief it is this. Lake Sevan is 1916 meters above sea level as against 900 meters of Erivan. This difference in elevation could be utilized as a source of electric power if the waters of Lake Sevan could be diverted into the plateau of Ararat. The plan is to construct a number of hydro-electric stations on this falls, beginning with Lake Sevan as far as Erivan and Charbakh. The calculated power to be obtained by these stations is 700,000 horse power, or 480,000 kilowatt (2 billion 480 million kilowatt hour) of electricity.

How much of this plan has been put through and what is being done during the current year? Leaving out the stations of Erivan and Kanaker which are operated at present by the waters of Zangou River and enter into the Sevan-Zangou network, only the stations of Lake Sevan and Giumush are in process of construction at present. Of the two, more progress has been made on the Sevan station. The station of Giumush has only begun. The structure of the Lake station is the more complex inasmuch as it is built underground, at a depth of 60 meters, which accounts for the atomgrad legend. To install the several aggregates in these underground caves, writes Sovetakan Hayastan, it was necessary to dig out some 300,000 cubic meters of rock. The optimistic foreign correspondent pounced on this bit of news and raised the total number of cubic meters to 500,000 for good measure.

Work on the construction of the tunnel and a dam from Lake Sevan was completed at the end of 1948. This 1.8 kilometer-long tunnel which emerges as an open canal pours the waters of Lake Sevan into the Zangou river near the village of Shahrez. As to the hydro-electric station of Lake Sevan which is the first in the Sevan-Zangou system, according to plan it was to have been completed by the end of 1948 but judging from what had been accomplished as late as October there was no guarantee that this

would be the case. After its completion this station is expected to generate 16,000 kilowatts of electric power.

The second largest station of the Sevan-Zangou network is that of Giumush with an approximate potential of 140,000 kilowatt power at an estimated cost of 600,000,000 rubles. Work on this project was begun in 1946 and although plans called for its completion in 1950 this is altogether out of the question. So far only preliminary work has been done, such as the construction of 6,000 workers' homes, some factories, and a railroad line from Erivan to Giumush. Notwithstanding it, judging from reports in Sovetakan Hayastan, the project is being pushed vigorously.

As to the actual capacity of the electric

stations at present extant in Armenia, we can only make an approximate conjecture in view of the fact that the last few years the Bolsheviks have avoided giving exact figures. We have the statement of L. Hovsepiyan in Moscow that the combined total capacity of hydro-electric stations in Armenia in 1945 was 124,000 kilowatts. Since then the only thing which can be shown is the addition of the 6th aggregate to the Kanaker-Kes and a few adjoining small stations whose capacity does not exceed 10-15,000 kilowatts, raising the total of Armenia's electric power to approximately 135-140,000, or 150,000 kilowatts at the most. Such a total is scarcely enough for Armenia's needs to say nothing of producing the atomgrad.



NO HITS, NO RUNS, ALL ERRORS

A Short Short Story

By DIKRAN AKILLIAN

He shoved his fingerless stump of a hand under my nose and whispered in a harsh voice, "You know what the score is? You know what the score is son?"

The way he said it, I knew that he knew but he wanted to know if I knew it. So I backed closer to the bar away from his foul smelling breath and said, "Sure, sure Pop. At the end of the fourth inning Sox two, Yanks one."

"No!" He breathed back. And he came closer and we were looking face to face a few inches apart. My God, he was ugly. Not a physical ugliness, so much as one of expression. A bitter face. His mouth leered and his left cheek kept twitching uncontrollably.

"No," he said. "You don't know what the score is." And his face was sad when he said it. It seemed all the sorrow of the human race, the pain, the tears was concentrated on his face. Looking at him I almost burst out crying.

Cripes, what the hell was this guy trying to do, going around spoiling everybody's enjoyment. Who the hell did he think he was. He asks me a simple question and I answer

it, so what the hell is the idea of him trying to make me cry like a two year old. I couldn't even enjoy my beer. Goddamn it, he had a nerve going around spoiling everybody's enjoyment.

I backed away from him again. His dirty clothes smelled and his breath smelled. Goddamn it, I told him the score, what more did he want. Then I looked into his eyes. God, what eyes. They seemed to have the sadness of what could have been done and never was, the sadness of death, the sadness of everything. The whole sadness of the world was in his eyes. And I was looking in them. I almost started crying then. I looked away and wished to hell he'd go.

Then he said, "No son, you don't know what the score is." And his voice was so sad, so damn sad that I felt a little sick in the stomach and got a lump in my throat.

I sipped my beer so I wouldn't have to look at his face but I had to. I looked at his sad face, his sad eyes, and I could still hear his sad voice, and I don't know why but I started crying.

THE END

A CORRECTION

It has been brought to our attention that an error was made when the late Vahan Cardashian was credited with the authorship of the article entitled "THE ARMENIAN REVOLUTIONARY FEDERATION" which appeared in the Winter, 1949-1950 issue of The Armenian Review. This erudite, highly analytical and interpretative article was originally written by Mrs. Vartouhie Calantar Nalbandian and was published in pamphlet form by the Armenian Press Bureau which continued to function under the sponsoring committee after Mr. Cardashian's death. The manuscript was found among Mr. Cardashian's papers which explains the erroneous ascription of the authorship.

We keenly regret this error and extend to Mrs. Nalbandian our sincere apologies for having been the victims of a wrong impression.

THE EDITORS

ARMENIAN LIFE ABROAD

*A digest of recent happenings among
the Armenian settlements in diaspora*

United States

The Los Angeles Armenian Center

Christmas and New Year celebrations coincided this year with the formal opening of the newly-constructed Armenian Center of Los Angeles. The dedicatory public opening was held in the presence of a capacity throng of local and visiting Armenians in which invited and local distinguished speakers hailed the new center as the temple for the preservation of Armenian tradition and spirit. The new building is equipped with a spacious auditorium for public meetings, an adequate stage for plays, a club with kitchen facilities, and numerous small rooms for committee meetings, with a cost of approximately \$100,000, nearly all of which has already been raised by generous individual and public contributions from all parts of the United States. A luxurious illustrated Album commemorates the event with congratulatory messages, a number of pertinent articles dedicated to Armenian thrift, constructive genius, patriotism, and an insurpassable spirit of sacrifice, and a complete list of those who contributed to the community center fund.

Sophia Hagopian Gift

A school building called Logan together with 3½ acres of adjoining land, located six miles from Fresno, is the gift of Mrs. Sophia Hagopian to the triple organizations of ARF, ARS, and AYF of that city. The 30,000 dol-

lar building which will serve as the community center of the above mentioned organizations, has two halls, a number of smaller rooms, a kitchen and an adjoining spacious lot for outdoor picnics. The building will be named after Mrs. Hagopian's late husband Levon Hagopian.

Ancha

With all but two hundred odd DP's out of a total of 3,500 Armenians stranded in German and Austrian camps having been settled in north and south Americas, the work of ANCHA enters its final stages. According to latest reports the Stuttgart camp practically has been vacated with the exception of a few hundred of sick and crippled who do not come within the quota category for immediate transportation. The ANCHA headquarters assure us, however, that they are determined to continue their efforts until the last Armenian DP has been removed to safer quarters. General Shekerjian and his assistants continue to remain on the spot, concentrating their efforts on the task of providing for the settlement of the remaining DP's who still are without their affidavits. The newcomers in the United States have injected fresh zest into the Armenian communities, enlivening them with their grateful appreciation, and their participation in public activities with their enthusiasm, spirit, and manifold talents.

Two Singers Arrive in U. S. A.

Recently two talented singers have arrived

in the States from France. The first of these, Mrs. Armenouhie Kevonian is noted for her genuine interpretation of the native folk songs of Taron, with an imposing record of successful concerts. At this writing she has already given one concert in Detroit and is preparing to give another in Fresno. The other is Miss Tzovinar Petrossian who has had frequent appearances on the Armenian stage in Paris and who likewise is preparing to give a series of concerts to Armenian audiences in the United States.

The Camp Haiastan Fund Drive

The Camp Haiastan \$50,000 fund drive which two years ago was interrupted in deference to two more pressing drives—the ANCHA, and the Beirut College funds—, under the sponsorship of the Armenian Youth Federation of America, has just been resumed. The opening shot was fired in a big public rally in Watertown's High School Auditorium which, to begin with, netted 5,000 dollars with additional unredeemed pledges which, when collected, will raise that sum to approximately 6,000. An active campaign committee represented by the triple organizations of ARF, ARS, and AYPF, is making a vigorous drive for its assigned goal of 50,000, nearly one third of which sum has already been raised. With quotas having been assigned from the central office to the various communities, and with instructions already mailed for the organization of local committees to organize and direct the drive, the camp committee is confident that the campaign will be a success. The 50,000 dollar fund will be used for the improvement of the camp premises, the renovation of the buildings, the construction of new cabins, sports grounds, and the installment of necessary facilities to make Camp Haiastan not only a summer resort but a veritable Armenian center for the physical and intellectual development of the young people.

France

Deovlet Gevorgian Dead

Deovlet Gevorgian, native of Zeitun, noted Armenian intellectual and author of the three volume history of the Zeitun War with the Turks, has passed away in Paris. Due to a misunderstanding, having been taken to a hospital for mentals to extricate himself from which it took years of persistent effort, the hapless historian's life was dire and full of privations. For seven years he was supported by one of his compatriots, Mushegh J.

Palestine

The Situation in Jerusalem

In spite of the tragic hardships to which they were subjected as a result of the Arab-Jewish conflicts, the Armenian community of Jerusalem is in high spirits, according to latest reports from that city. The fraternal aid extended by Armenians of abroad has played no small part in the amelioration of that suffering. Of the 2,000 Armenians who live in tents, more than half are said to get free noon meals. All the Armenian unions are feverishly at work reconstructing the life of the torn community, foremost among which is the Armenian Relief Society whose beneficent activity is seen everywhere. During the gravest days of the crisis the Armenians found time to celebrate the anniversaries of two great Armenian holidays: May 28, anniversary of Armenia's independence, and April 24, anniversary of Khanasor, the revolutionary expedition against the tormentors of the Armenian people.

Argentina

The Armenians of Argentina

A great exodus from Europe to South

America since the end of the last war is reported in a letter from Buenos Aires. Political uncertainty and economic distress are given as the causes of the exodus. During the last 2-3 years nearly 800 Armenians have immigrated to Argentine mostly from Greece. While there is no difficulty in finding jobs, the newcomers complain of housing shortage and the high rent. There are Armenian schools in Armenian populated centers, nevertheless the greater part of the young generation attend foreign schools and their knowledge of the Armenian language is very small.

Brazil

ARF Wins Elections

In the recent San Paulo election for the Armenian National Central Council the candidates of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation carried the day with an overwhelming majority. The opposition abstained from the elections, realizing they had no chance.

Sudan (Egypt)

Armenians Demand a Church

The Armenian community of Sudan consisting of 800 persons and scattered in four principal cities have been without a spiritual leader for over ten years. Their religious needs have been met by periodic visits of the clergy from elsewhere. Their latest visitor was Parkev Vardapet Vertanesian, sent by Archbishop Mambre Siroonian, Prelate of Egypt, who incidentally paid a visit to Mr. Wallace, the English Governor of Khartum and surrounding regions. Mr. Wallace was very warm in his expressions of friendship to the Armenians of Sudan. The latter took advantage of the occasion to renew their request for the construction of a church.

Turkey

The Question of the Patriarchate

The question of the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul which has been plaguing the community for the past few years is said to be as acute as ever. Archbishop Arslanian, the crux of the controversy, continues to cling to his throne while his opponents who are the majority insist on his resignation. In the recent ward council elections in Kadiköy the anti-Arslanian candidates won overwhelmingly. A similar victory was carried in the elections of Bera where Dr. Andreasian was elected president of the ward council. And although Arslanian contrived to bring about his removal, the authorities have reinstated him in his office. The Istanbul Armenian press has hailed these twin victories as a sign of recovery. On the other hand, the Governor of Istanbul has announced to the press that the community must solve such problems within the confine of the established law. He announced that a new law dealing with the Armenian problem was in the offing. "Jamanak," the Istanbul Armenian newspaper is informed that the Ankara Ministry of Interior has prepared a bill which will soon be presented to the Council of Ministers before it is submitted to the National Assembly.

Two Deaths

Yervant Alyanakian, philologist-artist who was recognized as authority on eastern archaeology, passed away last December in Istanbul. Another loss keenly felt is Father Serope A. Burmayan who was noted for his patriotic services among the Armenian remnants of Caesarea.

Iraq

Armenian Works Translated Into Arabic

An Armenian physician of Iraq, B. K. Dadarjian who used to publish studies from Arabic literature, recently has started the translation into Arabic of Armenian poets. Nasr el Hak, the Arabic daily of Musul, has published samples of his translations from the Armenian poets Tourian, Varoujan and Medzarents with biographical notes.

"Goyamart" Anniversary

"Goyamart," the Armenian language weekly newspaper of Iraq, has just completed its first year of publication. A special issue celebrating the occasion hails Goyamart's first year as an unexpected success in view of the peculiar conditions of the Armenian community.

Iran

Two Bishops Expelled

After the expulsion of Bishop Vahan Kostanian, Prelate of Iran and India Armenians, for his pro-Soviet subversive activities,

his successor, Bishop Drambian has been shipped to Etchmiadzin for the same reasons. Before his departure to Armenia, Drambian played a very bad role in disrupting the Armenian community of Iran. First, he demanded 2,600 Egyptian pounds (11,000 tumans) as unpaid arrears, and secondly, he tried to take along with him the precious vestments of his late predecessor, the lamented Prelate Melik-Tankian, ostensibly for safe-keeping in the Etchmiadzin Museum. He failed in both attempts and took his flight in a Soviet embassy automobile.

Dispatches from Iran announce the death of Garo (Morook) an old timer revolutionary volunteer fighter who ranked with such volunteer leaders as Kevork Chavoush and Aghbur Serop. The deceased hailed from Sassoun, settled in Hamadan after the first world war. He died of heart failure.

Haiduk Garo and Commander Sumbat Dead

A special letter from Teheran announces the death of Commander Sumbat in Erivan. Sumbat was a revolutionary volunteer fighter who later became a commander in the army of the Armenian independent republic. No details of his death are given.



CLASSIC BOOKS IN SERIAL FORM

SAMUEL

A Historical Novel
of Armenia 366-400 A. D.

By Raffi

Translated from the Armenian

BOOK II
CHAPTER IV

Hamazaspouhi

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A SUMMARY OF WHAT HAS PRECEDED

The story begins in the latter half of the fourth century A.D. In his contest with Byzantium for the mastery of Armenia, King Sapor of Persia has treacherously seized King Arshak (Arsaces) of Armenia and his Commander-in-chief, Prince Vasak Mamikonian, and has confined them in the fortress of Anoush. Sapor has killed Prince Vssak, stuffed his body with straw, and planted it in King Arshak's prison cell. Two powerful Armenian princes, Meroujan Artzrouni and Vahan Mamikonian, have gone over to the Persian side in return for promises. Meroujan is promised the throne of Armenia, while Vahan, the post of Commander-in-chief. Lady Mamikonian, the wife of Vahan, an ambitious woman of Persian sympathies, is a vigorous supporter of her husband's conspiracy. Samuel, her son, an intensely patriotic youth who is loyal to his king, is shocked, and feels disgraced at his parents' infamous conduct. Four youthful leaders who are loyal to the Armenian king, Sahak, the son of the High Priest, Mesrop, the future inventor of the Armenian alphabet, Prince Mushegh, the son of the slain Prince Mamikonian, and Samuel hold secret council and form an interim government to organize the resistance against King Sapor and the Armenian traitors. Mushegh is appointed commander of the armies, Sahak Parthev, High Priest, replacing his father Nerses who is an exile on the Island of Patmos, and the Queen is the supreme authority, replacing her exiled husband. Samuel's parents do not know that he is aware of their conspiracy and their relations ostensibly are cordial. Mushegh has secretly set out to organize his armies. King Arshak has just received a surprise visit from his trusted servant and friend Drastamat who is now in the service of Sapor but who actually is a secret agent of King Arshak. Meanwhile Samuel has set out with a retinue of over 300 men to meet his father who is expected to invade Armenia with Persian troops. Having traveled through the hostile territory of the Rushtounis who are at war with his father, Samuel loses all his men except 30 odd followers and eventually meets his sweetheart Ashkhen, the daughter of the Rushtouni Prince Garegin, and discovers that his father has burnt the Rushtouni fortress on an island in Lake Van, has captured Prince Garegin's wife Princess Hamazaspouhi, and has laid waste the country of the Rushtounis. Then follows a touching interview between the two lovers and they agree that Ashkhen will join the forces of the Queen while Samuel will make a last desperate attempt to persuade his father to turn back from his mad course.

The moon was gliding swiftly toward the tall peaks of Sipan which were immersed in a deep mournful darkness. It is not known why it was so reluctant to part with those beautiful spots where each night it had painted such magnificent pictures. Underneath it, the little sea of Van was rippling restlessly, like a lover who will soon part with his sweetheart. With an uncontrollable passion it had snatched the pale rays of the Queen of Heaven, merging in them in a shimmering embrace, and kissing them, and its sad wavelets were whispering: "Please don't leave me, don't leave me in this darkness."

But the moon kept moving on.

On the eastern shore of the lake one still could observe the jutting turrets of an old city surrounded by jagged walls. Under the moonlight, that old city looked like an old witch who still was remarkably beautiful for her age and equally attractive. There, in those towering mansions, those suspended gardens, once upon a time the world's greatest witch, Queen Semiramis, had revelled in her love for a young Armenian king.

It was the City of Van.

The moon hid itself amid the heights of Sipan, leaving behind itself a pitch darkness. One could no longer see the lovely city nor the shining lake. One could only hear the dull groan of the waves which in the nocturnal darkness sounded more like the wailings of a mourner.

The moonlight was replaced by another illumination. Exactly in the direction where the city stood there appeared in the air numerous firebrands. This spectacle at first left the impression that the whole sky was illuminated by a gigantic bonfire and the stars, having burnt out, were dropping to the ground one by one. But the fiery brands were rising from below and after executing various blazing configurations in the sky they were falling down. It was a garish, gorgeous, stately fireworks but an infernal

fireworks.

The fiery shower continued to pour down like a fiery hailstorm, gradually increasing in intensity, volume and speed. At times the surroundings rang with the dull echoes of motley cries—a terrible indignation and madness which was heard after the terrible fiery explosions even as the indignant cry of the skies is heard after the terrible lightning flash.

The City of Van was besieged.

That raking fire, those burning flames were being poured down on the city, now besieged by the savage Rushtounis and their neighboring Sassountzis, even as once hapless Troy had been besieged by the Greeks. Then the jealous Greeks had been fighting for the honor of beautiful Helen who had been kidnapped by a shameless lover from the very home of his host, Helen's husband king. But now the Rushtounis were fighting for their beloved Lady who had been kidnapped by her cruel brother.

Having dominated the neighboring hills, the mountaineers were pouring a hail of fire on the unfortunate city. Their cannons were the prototype of the future artillery—made of simple slingers but linked with iron chains to prevent being burnt up. They were loaded with bundles of rags dipped in sulphur or bits of mats soaked in oil or other inflammable liquids which floated in the air then dropped on the city. Others were using the same slingers for hurling stones.

Before long the city began to retaliate to the outside fire. From various parts of the city firebrands were flung upwards, but these flames did not go beyond the city walls and again descended on the city. They were the flames of the buildings which had begun to burn.

The defenders of the city were Persian troops whom Meroujan Artzrouni and Vahan Mamikonian had brought along with them. In the critical hour these troops were not concerned so much about fighting the out-

side enemy as they were about restraining the inhabitants inside who, terrified beyond description, were fleeing from their homes which had been fired. The troops were afraid lest the panicky citizens opened the gates of the city to let the enemy in.

But the fire steadily grew in intensity and volume. The first to be burnt up were the bales of hay which had been stacked on the rooftops of the stables, then came the stables and the store houses. The market place was aflame with all its riches as if it were a shred of cloth. The fire started from the wood workers shops and gradually extended itself to the residential sections. The people no longer cared about putting the fire out, they were too busy fleeing. And wherever they went, or in what direction they ran, they were confronted by the same fiery wall. The despairing cries of the panicky inhabitants, mingled with the crashing roar of the demolishing buildings added to the intensity of the general terror.

The terrible illumination brought in bold relief a gruesome monster which, like a petrified rolling dragon jutted upwards in the northern part of the city. As the illumination increased, the monster became clearer and all the more terrible in its features. It was proudly looking down on the sea of fire below, as if saying: "Pitiful element, gloat in your madness, carry on your savagery as far as you please; your waves will never reach my heights."

That was the citadel of Van,—that huge rocky fortress which nature itself had carved. That was the inaccessible castle whose marvels Armenian tradition ascribed to Queen Semiramis, the lover of the handsome Armenian King Ara.

Observed from a closer range, it looked like a grotesque camel, but a kneeling camel who, like a monstrous sphinx, was half-buried in the sands of the seashore. Its gigantic head stretched to the east while the huge hind part was sprawled on the west.

Its twin humps which jutted into the clouds bristled with huge turrets and pyramid-shaped fortifications. All the powers on earth could not have made a dent on those rocky slopes which had the hardness of steel. In its stony heart were numerous excavated chambers, deep passages and various halls and corridors which were as mysterious and as illegible as that inscrutable sphinx.

In one of those rock-hewn chambers where once upon a time, seated, Queen Semiramis gazed upon the blue mirror of Lake Van, the magnificent view of Mount Aragatz, and marveled at the beauties of Armenia, now sat another princess. She was sleeping one of those sweet, peaceful sleeps which the good spirits seldom confer upon mortals. She was sleeping on her beautiful bed without having undressed. Her beautiful face was flushed from the heat of the conflagration. A few beads of perspiration shone like diamonds on her plain forehead which was draped with black curls. At times her rosy lips quivered almost imperceptibly and a light smile marked her breathing with each rising of her volumptuous breast on which rested her bejeweled necklace. The two golden bracelets on her marble arms were linked to a short iron chain. One of her feet was likewise in chains. In that condition she looked like an imprisoned angel whose only crime was her innocence.

The red rays of the fire which had penetrated inside the windows illuminated the chamber with a brilliant, dazzling light. In that terrible illumination she looked even more beautiful.

The surrounding noise and confusion awakened her. She raised her head and gazed around her astounded. For a few moments she felt as if she were dreaming. She could comprehend nothing. She only heard the dull thud of footfalls, the confused cries and despairing bitter groans. It seemed to her this was the end of the world and the universe was writhing in a general

conflagration. She tried to drag herself to the window and look down, but her chains prevented her. The pandemonium below became intensified and the illumination of the chamber took on a brighter color. She dreaded now to look around her. She clamped her hands on her eyes and cried piteously: "Lord God, what is this confusion?"

Just then a man was climbing up the rock-hewn steps of the citadel with heavy firm steps. At times he stopped to gaze at the surrounding terror, then he continued his ascent along the winding steps which were illuminated by the light of a lantern held by an officer, although there was no need of a lantern. He kept climbing until he reached the top of the citadel and came to a stop in front of the Princess's chamber. He motioned to the officer to wait outside as he drew out of his pocket a key, opened the iron door and stepped inside.

"Greetings, dear Hamazaspouhi," he said, approaching the woman. "I thought you were asleep; it seems the noise outside disturbed your peace."

"What kind of noise is that?" the woman asked in a distressful voice.

"The noise of gladness, dear Hamazaspouhi. That is only the first night of the wedding festival,—your wedding, dear Hamazaspouhi. Do you see how beautifully illuminated is the city? No, you have not seen it. I will show you."

He approached the woman, released her chain, and holding her by the hand, he took her to the window.

"Look," he said.

It seemed hell itself with all its terrors was unfolded before the poor woman's eyes. She swayed and fell into the arms of the cruel visitor who picked her up and deposited her on the bed.

The visitor was Vahan Mamikonian, Samuel's father, and the uncle of the woman who had fainted. He was a tall and power-

fully-built man, and like all the Mamikonians, he was handsome. His somewhat sullen face expressed the tenacity and the cruelty of a man of great will power. He wore Persian medals. The woman's unexpected passing out disturbed him considerably. He did not think Hamazaspouhi was that weak, and that was why he had acted so carelessly.

But the woman's spell did not last long. She opened her indignant eyes and turning to her uncle she said:

"So, that's what you wanted, Vahan. Are you so far gone in your callousness that you can stand here and mock the wailings of thousands of families, that you think nothing of the roasting of those poor miseries right under their rooftops, and their being buried in the ashes of the homes?"

"Why do you scold me, dear Hamazaspouhi?" he replied in a calm voice. "It is your husband who is pouring fire on the city."

"My husband?" she exclaimed in a trembling voice. "It can't be, Vahan. He has never even hurt an ant in all his life. Unchain me, Vahan, I will go this minute, and if it is he, I will pour out all the bitterness of my heart on him."

"Yes, it is he. He has besieged the city with his savage mountaineers."

"If it is my husband, he is perpetrating this barbarism for my sake. Why did you bring me here, Vahan? Why did you rile up that good man? You have reduced our fortresses to ashes, and unable to satiate your cruelty with that much, you have now taken prisoner your own kin, your own flesh and blood. Why am I in these chains in this stony jail where only the most miserable criminals are exiled? Why all this? You did all this in order to make a beast of that good and merciful man, so he could come and act like a demon with this unfortunate city."

She held her eyes shut tightly in her hands and began to sob bitterly. Her tears worked on Prince Mamikonian who, con-

trolling his inner agitation, took hold of her chained hand and said in a very affected voice:

"These precious hands which have always been used to do good deeds, yes, are now in chains, and he who laid the chains is a brother. But do not reproach me, dear Hamazaspouhi. In life, the life of governments in particular, there are times, bitter as they may be, when father, mother, sister, brother or stranger are punished alike when they become an obstacle in the way of a great project for the common weal. We—both Meroujan and I,—are serving that cause."

"What is that cause, and what is that great project?"

"You know very well, dear Hamazaspouhi, why do you ask?"

The Lady's sad eyes flashed with indignation as she shouted: "Shame on you, Vahan, for having stained the bright memory of the Mamikonians with your shameful act . . . Black be the day you were born. Your mother would have done better had she brought forth a stone instead of a scourge to the land of Armenia like you . . ."

The Prince was silent. A cold shiver passed through his entire body and on his calm face there appeared vague convulsions expressive of deep agitation.

"You are cursing me, Hamazaspouhi," he said.

"You are unworthy of other words, Vahan. He who deserts the mother church, who tries to spread the heathen religion of the Persians in his fatherland,—he who betrays his king and who wants to install the barbaric rule of the Persians in his country, — he who is ruining his country with blood and fire, is worthy of curse alone, Vahan. Thousands of mothers who shall be robbed of their children will curse you, thousands of husbands who shall be widowers will curse you, thousands of sisters whose brothers shall fall in battle will curse you,

you will be cursed by thousands of children who shall be orphans, future generations will curse you as long as they remember the evil deeds of an evil man . . ."

These words struck the Prince like a bolt of lightning.

"Yes," he replied in a distressed voice,—  
"all those sacrifices must be made and I feel grieved that they must be made. But without those sacrifices there is no salvation. Let the present and future generations curse me. My conscience is clear. I am convinced that what I am doing is not bad. Why do you forget the past, Hamazaspouhi? Why do you forget the history,—our tragic history of latest times? When Tiran, the father of our present exiled king, wanted to exterminate the entire tribes of the Artzrounis and the Rushtounis, when he put them all to the sword without distinction of sex or age, who were the two infants who alone escaped the general massacre?"

"One was Tajat Rushtouni, the father of my husband; the other was Shavasp Artzrouni, Meroujan's father."

"Yes, those two alone were saved from the two populous princely families. But when the executioners brought those two infants before Tiran to be executed, who were the men who unsheathing their swords stepped into the arena of blood and saved those innocent babies?"

"One was your father, — Artavast, and the other was your brother,—Vasak."

"Yes, Hamazaspouhi, one was my father and the other was my brother. Because of those two infants, they left the service of Tiran, left their paternal heritage, — the Taron, and fortified themselves in the mountains of Taik. There they nurtured the babies, brought them up, and married them to their daughters. Shavasp's son was Meroujan Artzrouni, and Tajat's son was Garegin Rushtouni,—your husband. Thus we saved the two princely houses from complete extinction."



"I don't understand why you are reminding me of all this," the Lady interrupted.

"I am refreshing your memory in order to show you that the hands of the Arshakounis are stained with blood and that blood must be expunged."

"But not with the blood of the innocent people."

"With the blood of the innocent people too, when that people foolishly interferes and defends the bankrupt and degenerated house of the Arshakounis had we been rid of which long since we would have been better off, both we and our country."

"Your head is full of chimeras, Vahan," the Lady exclaimed indignantly.—"Passion, hatred, and wanton revenge have blinded you and have divested you of everything which is human and godly. Tell me, wherein is guilty Tiran's son Arshak, our present unfortunate king who is pining away in the dark dungeon of Anoush? Why should he be blamed for the behaviour of his father?"

"Therein, dear Hamazaspouhi," replied the Prince with a bitter smile, "that his hands, too, are not clean. Have a little zeal for your own self, Hamazaspouhi. Who was the man who had your father killed, can you tell me? And who was the man who killed my brother?"

"King Arshak."

"Who massacred the tribe of the Kam-sarakans,—our son-in-law, and seized their city of Yervandashat and their fortress of Artageres?"

"King Arshak. But what are you trying to prove by that, Vahan? Your and Meroujan's rebellion is not directed against the Arshakouni kings but against the kingdom itself. Do you understand, Vahan? Tiran and his son Arshak might have been bad kings but wherein are to be blamed their heirs? Who knows but Arshak's son Pap might be a good king for us?"

"You are wrong, Hamazaspouhi, the snake will not beget a fish, nor the wolf a

lamb."

"You too are wrong, Vahan. See, your begotten is Samuel, a most honorable youth."

It would be difficult to find one creature in all the world who could have dared to insult this arrogant, selfish prince so boldly and so sharply in his face without avoiding punishment. But Vahan not only respected Lady Hamazaspouhi but loved her. Of all the daughters of the Mamikonians, Hamazaspouhi stood out in her high virtue and intellect. That was the reason why she was loved by all. But the Prince, seeing that the controversy was taking a sharp turn, ignored his kinsman's insult, saying:

"Samuel is not my son if he does not follow me. But be that as it may, we are digressing from the real issue, Hamazaspouhi. The proofs which I have adduced against the irregular behaviour of Tiran and Arshak was in order to show you that Meroujan and I have good reasons to hate the Arshakounis. The same reasons applied to your husband because the Arshakounis massacred his whole tribe. On the other hand, you and your husband not only persist in remaining loyal to the executioners of your ancestors, but you are stubbornly defending them. He who is their defender is our enemy, and we treat an enemy as an enemy. That is the reason why Meroujan and I destroyed your castles and brought you here a prisoner, Hamazaspouhi."

"Why did you bring me here?"

"To force your husband to surrender."

"And now you see that, instead of surrendering, he is burning Meroujan's city and we find ourselves in a sea of fire. What did you get by your savagery, Vahan? Nothing, except that you further inflamed our internal bloody fight. And that fight will keep on, all the more terrible, as long as you don't turn back from your evil ways. I repeat what I said a few moments ago. To try to destroy the Christian religion, to try to destroy the throne of the real kings, that is the work of traitors. Both I and my husband will never

truck with traitors."

"It is no use thinking like this, Hamazaspouhi. We, I mean Meroujan and I, would have committed a great crime had our intentions been what you think, namely to destroy our religion. We are trying to return to our old religion, — the religion of our ancestors' beloved gods. The majority of our people still adhere to the old religion and abhor Christianity. What did Christianity give us? Only this much that it brought us closer to the perfidious Byzantines and repelled and antagonized our old friends and allies, the Persians."

"Is it possible, Vahan, to look upon religion from political consideration and to make it a plaything of various interests? Because it is necessary to change our religion in order to befriend the Persians should we then change it?"

"I am not through yet, Hamazaspouhi. You are always interrupting me."

"Very well, finish your saying."

"You are also wrong in thinking that we are trying to destroy our own royal throne. Is it really true that the Arshakounis are our own kings? They are aliens, unrelated to us, because they are Parthians come from other lands. We only endured their presence with us, as did the Persians as long as the Arshakounis reigned there. Now the Arshakounis have fallen and there is a new Sassanian dynasty there. These Sassanians cannot tolerate the Christian Arshakounis. It is this stumbling block which we are trying to remove. Hereafter, we shall have only our own kings, because Sapor has promised to make Meroujan king of Armenia."

There flashed a scornful smile on the Lady's face, and shaking her beautiful head, she replied:

"As to how far you can trust the promises of perfidious Sapor, that is an illusion which can attract only a mad Meroujan. Be that as it may. But if we are to judge as you have

done, Vahan, that the Arshakounis are not our kindred because they are Parthians, none of us in Armenia can be called genuine natives. We Mamakonians are of Chinese origin, the ancestors of your beloved Meroujan are Assyrians, and thus, many of the princely families can be traced to various alien origins. But time has assimilated them; they speak the Armenian language now, worship the Armenian religion, and their blood is mingled with the blood of the Armenians. The same thing happened to the Arshakounis."

The Prince's patience was at an end. He rose to his feet, and standing before the Lady, he said:

"You love to debate, Hamazaspouhi, you were a debator when you were a child and we used to play marbles together at the courtyard of our castle. I will cut it short. This is our vow. Christianity must be destroyed and the reign of the Arshakounis must come to an end, because the peace of our land demands it. Meroujan must become our king under the suzerainty of the Persians. We must unite with the Persians through our common religion if we are to win their friendship. There must be no religious difference between them and us."

"Let them unite with us," the Lady interrupted. "Let them accept Christianity and again there will be no religious difference between us."

"It is always the weak who follow the strong. We are weak while they are strong."

"In Christianity, the least is the greatest of them all, and the weakest the strongest of them all."

"That is an illusion of the mind. The weak is weak, and the strong is strong. You tell me this, Hamazaspouhi, are you with us?"

"Never!"

"He who is not with us is our enemy."

"I would never count myself as your friend, even though I am the daughter of your brother."

"He who is not with us will be punished, regardless of kinship."

"What more punishment could you inflict on me than these?"

And the Lady pointed to her chains.

"There is the more terrible, Hamazas-pouhi."

"I am prepared for the worst, Vahan."

"Think well."

"I have thought out the whole thing and my decision is made."

The cries and the shrieks outside became even more piteous. The small chamber where they stood became illuminated with a bloody garish light. The debate was interrupted. The Lady held her eyes and exclaimed:

"Behold, Vahan, the answer to your threats. This is what you want, that fire, that blood . . ."

## CHAPTER V

### The Morning After a Terrible Night

It was still dark, long before the dawn. A white horseman, surrounded by a company of his guards, was constantly galloping from one end of the turbulent city to the other. He flitted through the fires and the crumbling buildings without the least fear or sense of danger. His extreme self-assurance was so impressive you'd think the magnificent body of this horseman was enchanted and immune to all danger. As a matter of fact it was the universal opinion of the public that his body was invulnerable.

The man was Meroujan Artzrouni.

Nature had created him as magnificent as he was ambitious, but when it came to his uncontrollable ruthlessness, he was terrible. His tribal Assyrian blood, mingled with that of the Armenians and the sons of Chaymar Fortress, had endowed him with a powerful build and the formidableness of the dragon. In his awesomeness he was equally handsome as Lucifer the avenger of spirits. In his solid bronze armour, his shining arms, he shone there before the lapping flames, and quite in keeping with his name, like a veritable sun which dazzled the eyes. Whenever he showed himself, the noise ceased and the turbulence came to a standstill. But the minute he moved on, one could hear the muffled murmurs of cursing after him. His own fellow-citizens were cursing him openly. Yet there was a time, and not long ago, when he

passed through the streets of the city young girls scattered flowers under the hooves of his white steed, while the women sang his praises.

He crossed the big square which faced his mansion. The beautiful, colonnaded mansion was in flames. But it was burning not by the enemy's fire, but by the brands hurled by the citizens. "If our homes are to be consumed by the fire, let's throw this one in too," they had said, setting the building on fire. He gazed at this superb structure of his ancestors and his face flushed with indignation. The mansion was vacant because his family and relatives had moved to the summer resort of the Artzrounis in their native Vostan. Only a few servants and waiters were left behind.

The public square was thronged by a huge crowd. Women and children who had fled from their burning homes, having taken along what few pieces of furniture they could drag, had taken refuge there in a confused, crowded huddle. Under the illumination of the conflagration, this mass of stunned, shaken miseries presented a most pitiful and hideous spectacle.

When he came quite close the women warned him: "Don't go near, Meroujan."

"Put the fire out," cried the children.

He took his hands to his eyes. What was it that he wiped off there? Was that stony

heart capable of weeping? But the cries of the children crushed the stone, shattered the rock. He bolted to one of the city gates where a furious fight was waging between a company of citizens and the Persian guards.

"They want to open the gates," they told him. The guards began to massacre his own countrymen. He kept on going. A high-ranking Persian dignitary was accompanying him. When they were a little way off, he observed to his companion:

"It will be impossible to defend the city longer, Prince."

"Why?"

"Because this minute we saw how the citizens want to open the gates of the city to the enemy."

"For that I ordered the guards to massacre them."

"How many shall we massacre?"

"All of them, if that's the way they are going to behave."

"In that case it will be impossible for us to fight both the citizens and the outside enemy."

"If that be impossible, to die, I think, is quite possible."

"There's no other way. But wouldn't it be better, while it is still dark, to take advantage of the night, pierce the enemy chain, and escape from the city?"

"It's not so easy to pierce the chain of those Rushtouni beasts. We must defend the city to the last breath. When it gets a bit lighter we will come out and fight them."

The Persian dignitary said no more. They made the rounds of the other gates of the city all of which were under strict vigilance. The night passed in a sea of infernal raging fire. But the morning was the beginning of a terrible massacre on the ruins of the smouldering city. During the night it was the buildings, but now it was the men who were being destroyed.

The morning mist had just begun to clear, and the birds had just begun to warble the

glad tidings of the new dawn when one of the city gates was crashed by the joint action of the inmates and the besiegers outside. Instantly, the furious, billowing multitude outside rushed into the city.

"Let all the Christians stand aside," roared thousands of voices.

Forgetting the heavy losses they had sustained, the inhabitants of the city fell in line with the same mountaineers who had destroyed their homes and who had been the cause of their misfortunes, and began to massacre the Persian troops. It was now the turn of the spear and the sword. With each flash of the steel there was heard the terrific quiver of iron shields. The fight was taking place in the streets. The Persian soldiers were fighting for their very lives, determined to take at least a few along with them to perdition. Meroujan Artzrouni had exhausted all his eloquence in exhorting the troops to greater exertions. Orders no longer had any effect. Like lightning, he bolted from one street to another, wherever he saw the Persians were weakening.

During all this while there was some one who from the heights of the citadel was watching what was going on below. The more he looked, the more sad and despairing was the expression on his face. Meroujan's fellow-citizens, having joined ranks with his enemies, were massacring the troops which had been brought over from Persia. "How little have we understood the Armenian people," he was saying to himself, and his raging heart was filled with boundless bitterness.

That man was Vahan Mamikonian who, after his unsuccessful interview with Lady Hamazaspouhi, had come out to watch the turmoil in the city. The sun was not yet up, but the thick darkness of pre-dawn was beginning to thin off and the surroundings were becoming more visible. From his citadel heights he espied a large company of mountaineers who were headed straight in his

direction. They were led by a powerful warrior who could scarcely be seen amid his armoured and shield-bearing guards. He came to a stop at the base of the citadel, looked up, and seeing Prince Mamikonian standing on the height, challenged him:

"Lord Mamikonian, why are you standing there on those tall crags like a timorous fox? Come down and let us settle this bloody massacre in single combat. You have already lost the virtue of your tribe, at least don't stain your valor."

"It is not for us to take lessons in nobility from the mountaineers, Lord of the Rushtounis. You, if you really wanted to prevent the spilling of the blood of thousands of innocents, if you really did not want to see thousands of homes reduced to ashes, you should have issued your challenge earlier when, as yet, not a drop of blood was shed. Then I would have been ready and willing to come out of the city and cross swords with you. But since the fight was begun in this inhuman way, let it keep on to the finish."

"The mountaineer learned that inhumanity from you, Lord Mamikonian. He who sneaks in like a thief into the defenseless castle of his sister and abducts her from her inaccessible bedroom, he has no right to talk about chivalry."

Prince Mamikonian could find no words to reply; his brother-in-law's insult had pierced him to the heart. He turned to the Persian guards and ordered them to defend the fort. At the same instant Garegin Rushtouni ordered his mountaineers to storm it.

The attack was launched on the western side of the citadel which looked on the sea. On this side was the only entrance which was accessible by a stairway whose steps had been carved in the rock. Where nature had left its fortification deficient, there human ingenuity had filled the gap through separate walls and bastions which rose in serried ranks to the top of the citadel.

The "cliff-climbers" of the Rushtounis began the ascent. They were equipped with iron hooks with which they climbed up the sleek surface of the rocky wall. These daring, fearless bandits were met with a shower of arrows from above but they were protected by shields which had the shape of umbrellas and were tied to their shoulders. Like powerless feathers the arrows flicked off the impenetrable shields.

"Hurl stones at them," commanded Prince Mamikonian. Then began a hail of stones. Hundreds of hands, with slingers holding heavy stones, spun in the air, and hundreds of rocks rocketed toward their targets. The climbers' leather shields were impotent against this rocky bombardment. When hit, they catapulted to the ground.

At the same time an entirely different operation was being enacted in the northern part of the citadel. More than one hundred hands were pushing a grotesque wooden monster whose huge weight would scarcely move on its thick, clumsy wheels. It looked like one of those flat carts used by the peasants, with this difference that, while the peasants' cart is pulled by harnessed animals, the wheels of this crude instrument were pushed by men who were hidden under the solid floor and could not be seen. Countless hands, with picks and spades, were leveling the path, and the monster, like horror personified, kept crawling at a sluggish pace. The defenders of the fort were terror-stricken at sight of this dark, menacing spectacle. They now concentrated their volleys on the monster, but the rocks and the arrows which they hurled hit a solid floor and ricocheted in all directions. The monster felt nothing, and like a dull senseless terror, continued its sluggish pace.

That was the dreadful turrets,—the giant mole which burrows the foundations of castles and fortresses.

Impregnable on three sides with their



towering, perpendicular and inaccessible walls, this was the only vulnerable side of the citadel. The somewhat overhanging, slanting side had been fortified by a number of solid walls and turrets. The monster drew near, and proudly raising its formidable head, leaned against the wall as onto a soft pillow. In the secret cells of its structure were hidden many men, armed with picks, spades, and hammers. These men began to dig off the wall's foundation. Nothing but fire could save the fortress now from this formidable enemy. The defenders of the fort now cut loose with a volley of incendiary balls but these had no effect on the monster. Its floor was covered with thick blankets soaked in water. The fiery balls fell on the wet floor with a sizzling sound and were instantly extinguished, leaving behind them an unpleasant searing smell.

The men who were sheltered under the monster diligently kept digging away at the solid base of the wall. They had already opened a big hole through the wall only to encounter a solid rock. The long picks and the hammers were pounding away at the rock with no result. They thought of raising the cart a little upwards in order to avoid the rock. While in the midst of these operations, Prince Mamikonian was watching them from above. His frozen face expressed both sadness and amusement. "Fools!" he thought, "what will it avail you if you demolish this wall?" And as a matter of fact they would gain nothing, because, if they surmounted the first wall there would be the second and third walls which rose one after the other along the entire height of the hill on top of which rested the citadel.

But the thing which was bothering the Prince was that the mountaineers could not have brought these preparations with them, and that they had obtained them from the city, which meant that they had taken over the city. What had happened to Meroujan? What had happened to the Persian troops

who guarded the city? That thought troubled him deeply. Losing Meroujan he would have lost forever the very idea which meant so much to him and for the realization of which he had sacrificed everything.

No less worried was the Persian garrison. They plainly saw that the city was occupied while they were stranded on top of a rock, surrounded by countless enemies. Their leader approached the Prince and said in a breathless voice:

"The crisis is great, my Lord."

"I see."

"We must surrender, my Lord."

"Never!"

"In a few moments the wild mob will rush in."

"Impossible. It shows that you don't know this fortress."

"If the strength of the fort will defend us from the outside enemy, how about the inside enemy,—the hunger and thirst? They will lay siege to us and starve us out."

"All the better. You will die and be saved."

"Why die in vain?"

"So that the glory of the banner of the King of Kings will not be stained. So that they will not say the Persian soldier is a coward."

The officer hung his head and went away without saying a word.

"You scum!" the Prince spat out after him, "you are brave only when the enemy is fleeing before you."

The same thing happened in the city below. When the mountaineers crashed the gates and rushed into the city, the Persians were panick-stricken. All of Meroujan's efforts to bolster them up were in vain. After a slight resistance a part of them surrendered while the rest took to flight from the other gates of the city. Meroujan was left alone, repudiated by countrymen, and deserted by the Persians on whom he had pinned his hopes. For the last time he turned his sorrow-

ful gaze on the city which had been reduced to ashes, where his ancestors had lived and ruled, and taking advantage of the general confusion, together with a company of his guards he came out of the city and disappeared in the morning dusk.

By this time the morning dusk was completely cleared giving way to the delightful pre-dawn aurora. The dawn was turning red, painting the horizon with purple and gold. Before long the first rays of the sun fell upon a bloody act. The rupture in the first wall had so far advanced that the mountaineers were now digging at the base of the second wall. The monster was left outside, its huge body could not have crawled through the opening. Resistance from the citadel practically had ceased. The Persians now sought their salvation only in surrender although they had ample means of defending themselves. Prince Mamikonian, having long since grasped the truth that in time of danger one could not rely on the Persian soldier, had left them to their own. On the other side the climbers had made great progress. One of them already had climbed to the entrance of the fort and had pinned his dagger on the armoured gate.

"Open up," he was shouting, "if you don't want to see thousands of my comrades pin their daggers at your hearts."

The doors were opened. Higher up was hoisted the sign of surrender, while down below there was universal jubilation among the mountaineers. Presently, the Patriarch (the chief) of the Rushtounis, surrounded by his dignitaries, solemnly approached the base of the fort. At the same time, the commander of the Persians came down, and offering him the keys of the citadel, said:

"I surrender the fort of vanquished Meroujan to the noblest of victors. Accept these keys, Lord Rushtouni. And now, the head of your humble servant and the heads of the garrison under my command are at the mercy of your sword or your magnanimity."

There was a chorus of triumphant shouts, repeated over and over again. The chief of the Rushtounis accepted the keys, saying:

"I will spare your heads, and both you and your garrison will enjoy my magnanimity if you will only show me where Lady Rushtouni is hidden."

"Right away," came a voice from the heights of the citadel which was immediately drowned in the general frantic shouts.

That was the voice of Vahan Mamikonian. He was still standing there alone, bitterly watching what was transpiring below. When he saw the delivery of the keys, deeming all was lost, he turned to his men, gave them a mysterious signal, then left.

At that instant, from one of the turrets on the western front a white body hung down which shone like snow under the first rays of the sun. All looked at it and were horrified. The only person who was not horrified was Prince Mamikonian. Yet he was sorry. He turned his gaze toward the white body, viewed it with a palpitating heart, then wiped the tear in his eye, and directed his tottering steps toward the northern part of the citadel. The entire universe was a blackout for him now. He was going but did not know where he was going. Instinctively he approached one of those rock-hewn chambers whose entrance was closed by an iron door. He took out a small key from his pocket and opened the door. He stepped inside and locked the door behind him. In a corner of the cell there was a trap door which was indistinguishable from the floor which dropped open at a slight pressure, exposing a narrow passage scarcely the width of a man. It was a subterranean secret passage which was used only in times of flight.

The minute the father disappeared in the secret passage, his son Samuel was entering the city through one of the gates. The first thing which struck the youth's attention were the two winged dragons which kept vigil over the gate on right and left. Those magni-

ficient specimens of art were now shattered and ruined. The burnt city was still smouldering among the unextinguished cinders.

He noticed the white body hanging from the high turret which still was shining like snow under the first rays of the sun.

"What is that?" he asked horrified.

"That is the body of Lady Rushtouni," they replied.

"Who hanged her?"

"Vahan Mamikonian."

"Cain . . .," the poor youth exclaimed, covering his eyes. "He killed your brother, but you, you have killed your sister!"

## CHAPTER VI

### The Apostate on the Threshold of His House

Holy mass was still in process of celebration in the Cathedral of Hadamakert, and although it was neither a holiday nor Sunday, the church was filled with a huge throng. Opposite the altar, in the right hand corner of the church, there was an alcove supported by four marble pillars whose front looking toward the altar was cut off by a gilt lattice. Thick scarlet curtains hanging from the inside made the interior of the alcove invisible to the outsider. In this position, the alcove looked more like a closed, secluded chapel.

The floor of the alcove was covered with precious carpets while on one side rested a magnificent sofa. As the holy mass proceeded, a woman sometimes knelt down and prayed, sometimes stood up and prayed, sometimes stood and worshipped, and sometimes sat on the sofa and listened to the ceremony with rapt attention. She was devotion personified, enraptured in body and soul by the holy ceremony of the mass.

At no time had her religious feelings been so inflamed, never had she offered her petition and importunities so ardently and so passionately before the holy altar as now. She was sorrowful as one in mourning and the hot tears flowed down her sorrowful face like a torrent.

She was the Lady of Vaspourakan, the mother of Meroujan.

The chapel in which she was retired was

the prayer house of the Artzrouni tribe. When they had built the cathedral, the Artzrounis had set this chapel aside for the exclusive use of their princely house.

When the ceremony was over, she stood up as the officiating priest entered in and offered her the unleavened bread from the holy altar. She accepted the bread, meanwhile kissing the holy father's right hand. Her afflicted face and those meek eyes, in which shone infinite goodness, took on a more tranquil and comforting expression now which forced respect only. This estimable personality united in her the noblest qualities of a high nobelwoman and in the virtues of a devoted Christian.

"How is your daughter, holy father?" she asked, "they told me she was very ill."

"She is quite well now, Madam," the priest replied. "The danger is past. My daughter owes her life to you, Madam. If you had not hastened the State physician, I would perhaps have lost my child. God grant you a long life, Madam."

"That was my duty, holy father, they all are my children," she said. "I am sorry I am too busy these days to be able to pay her a personal visit."

"She would be very happy, Madam, your visit would dispel all her pains."

The priest withdrew as the two maids entered in, who had been waiting in the corri-

dor of the chapel. Holding on to her from right and left, they began to descend the marble stairs of the alcove. After the mass, the people stayed because the Superior Father of the State would read the sermon, but the Lady would not wait and made her exit through a private door.

In the street a stately carriage was in waiting. She and the two maids stepped inside and the white donkeys started at a steady pace. Two armed aides in red uniforms trotted before the carriage, while a company of guards followed the rear, likewise on foot. From the door of the church, the entire length of the street was lined up with the poor who anxiously awaited the passing of that benevolent carriage. The Lady's Major approached them purse in hand and distributed to the poor their customary alms. As the carriage passed through the streets, every one, great or small, young or old, stood up respectfully, nodded to it in homage and respectful love. It was the mother of all, the Lady of the Land that was passing. Leaning out, she nodded to all, accepting their greetings with gracious kindness.

The carriage came to a stop in front of a magnificent princely mansion the entrance of which, on either side, was watched over by two winged dragons, the symbol of the Artzrounis which stood at all the entrances of the cities and the palaces. The Lady stepped out of the carriage, and surrounded by her servants, entered the premises of the mansion. Walking through the luxuriant and verdant paths of the courtyard, sheltered by centuries-old towering trees, she reached her private chamber and entered in. Her servants retired, leaving behind only the maids who, after a while, seeing their Mistress had no special orders for them, also left her alone.

The first to drop in to receive the Lady's blessing was her daughter-in-law—Meroujan's wife, together with her two infants hanging on her hands. They drew near and

kissed the Lady's right hand, according to their daily custom when the Lady returned from the church. The Lady took out the holy bread which the holy father had given her and divided it between the mother and the children. The children,—one of them a boy and the other a girl—, laid their tiny hands on the Lady's knee, and turning their shining, questioning eyes on her, asked her:

"Why is the priest's bread so sweet, Granny?"

"That is God's bread, my children, that's why it is so sweet," the Lady replied, caressing their curly heads.

Their mother was standing, not having the courage of sitting down in the presence of her mother-in-law. She was a lovely woman, slender, and exceedingly delicate and gentle. She left the impression as if to say: "Don't touch me, or else I will crumble." She spoke only when her mother-in-law asked her, and each time her pale cheeks became suffused with a faint crimson. She still had the bashfulness of an innocent girl, coupled with the reverence of a daughter-in-law.

The Lady of Vaspourakan was a widow. Her husband, Shavasp Artzrouni, had only recently passed away. That was the reason why she still was wearing her mourning veil. Having lost her beloved spouse, she replaced him in the house as a patriarch, before whose authority all bowed, and in the government of the land she was regarded as a dignitary. She was the sister of Lady Vahan Mamikonian, Samuel's mother. Her daughter-in-law, Meroujan's wife, also was a member of the Mamikonian family. Close marriages were customary in those days among the Armenians, especially among the princely families. As to the Mamikonian family, like a chain, their daughters linked together not only the families of the higher princes, but the King's house, as well as the house of the High Priest. It was these daughters who, with their virtue, adorned the palaces of the princes, the

King's court, as well as the sublime seat of the Catholicos.

"Your breakfast is ready," the daughter-in-law said. "Where would you like it served? Here, or in the dining room?"

"I have no appetite at all, dear Vahandoukht," the Lady replied. "I was very restless last night, I couldn't sleep a wink. I feel ill just now, my head is buzzing."

"Rest a bit, you got up very early this morning."

"How can I? How can I rest?"

She looked at the pale face of her daughter-in-law and she was horrified. In one night the poor woman had completely melted away. It seemed she too had not slept, she too was restless. What could have happened?

That magnificent home which lacked nothing to make happiness complete, left a very sad impression that day, as if it was a house of mourning. All the faces were stamped with an inexpressible sorrow. All were silent, all shrank from speaking to one another. It seemed there was something which they all dreaded, afraid to mention it to one another for fear of intensifying the pain in their hearts.

Yesterday they had received the news that Meroujan was coming. Today, after dinner, he was to enter his capital. Both for the mother and the wife, what greater tidings, what more good news could have been so joyful than that, after a long absence, their beloved was returning home. But instead of being glad, they were sad.

He was returning as an apostate, a traitor. And now, the mother and the wife had to embrace him, wipe off the dust from his brow. That was a heavy thing, heavy as death, both for the mother and the wife. They already knew the tragic events in Van, and the painful martyrdom of their kinswoman—the hapless Hamazaspouhi. They also knew what more Meroujan was about to do!

The mother had long since heard about

the evil intentions of her son but she had scrupulously hidden it from her daughter-in-law lest the poor woman, who already was all too frail, might not stand the shock. But it was impossible to keep it a secret indefinitely because today her husband was coming. That was the reason why, by way of paving the ground, yesterday she had called her in her presence and had told her everything.

After the tragic destruction of Van, as has been seen, Meroujan scarcely had escaped the vengeance of his countrymen together with a small band of his bodyguard. And fearing he might encounter the same dangers when he entered his own metropolis, he had hastened from half way a messenger to his mother to prepare her for his arrival. Here, in his own home, he intended to stop a while, take a little rest, and wait for the arrival of the Persian troops.

"I had summoned the Mayor of the city," the Lady said. "I wanted to know what preparations he has made."

"He is here," the daughter-in-law replied. "He has been waiting here long before you returned from the church. What arrangements was he to make?"

The question was left unanswered. Just then bolted in a gay, lively girl who, constantly surveying herself, came near and stood before the Lady, and turning her smiling eyes on her, said:

"Look, mother, is this dress all right?"

That was Meroujan's sister who had dressed herself for the reception of her brother. Everyone in the house was sad except her. The mother looked at her and her eyes were filled with tears. She found no words to answer her daughter. What could she say? How could she pour cold water on that ardent love which the girl cherished toward her brother? Could she explain to her that there were circumstances in life which separated the sister from her brother, and the mother from her son? Although the



girl was quite grown, she was still too young to comprehend such things. She had heard many things, they had told her everything, but still she loved her brother. She was the girl whom Samuel's mother had marked for her son, although Samuel's heart belonged to Ashkhen, the daughter of the Rushtounis.

Shavaspouhi—that was her name—, noticing her mother's sad face, fell on her knees, seized her trembling hands, and smothering them with burning kisses, exclaimed:

"Mother, mother dear, why are you crying? If you cry, I too will cry."

"We too will cry," spoke up the little boy and girl who were staring at that touching spectacle.

The mother of the children took them and walked out of the salon with a burning heart. The Lady kissed her daughter, caressingly raised her to her feet and said:

"Go, my dear child, and tell them I want to see the Mayor. I want to talk to him on a very important matter. Tell the servants that I don't want to be disturbed. If the holy father comes, tell them to let him in."

The girl again kissed her mother's hand and hurried out. The Lady was left alone in the salon. Her clear mind had never been so clouded as that morning. Never had she been so helpless and so shackled by insurmountable perplexities. She could see no way out, no matter how hard she plied her mind. It was the maternal feelings which were at war in her. How was she to receive her son—that misguided, yet very beloved son? Suppose she became reconciled with him, hoping to correct him through her influence, and turn him from his evil ways. But what about the people? Could they be reconciled with him too? He who had started an open war against his people to force his will upon them or to put them to the sword, could he be reconciled with his people? Those bitter, painful thoughts were rocking her soul when the Mayor came in, nodded with his head several times from a distance, came

near, and silent and confused, stood before the Lady's sofa. He kept standing, despite his advanced age and despite the Lady's repeated requests to be seated, preserving the traditional homage which was due to the distinguished woman.

"How are your preparations, Gourgen?" the Lady asked.

"Everything has been arranged, Madam," the old man replied in a sad voice. "Everything is being done as you ordered."

He started to recount the details of the reception.

"Do you think there will be any untoward incidents, Gourgen?" the Lady asked, not altogether satisfied with the old man's explanations.

"Not only I think, but I firmly believe that there will be no untoward incidents, Madam. It's true that our citizens are very indignant but they will never carry their indignation so far as to murder their master. Of that I am sure, Madam, very sure."

He nodded his head on the last words several times in affirmation, then he continued:

"What happened to the holy father? He is late. Though his sermon was a bit long, it nevertheless completely quieted the people. He brought many examples from the gospel, the prophets and the apostles. After he came out of the church, the crowd stayed behind in the courtyard and continued the hot debate. The holy father mingled with them, calling on this or that group, offering them his advice, exhorting them, and quieting their passions. It would have been a different thing, Madam, were the Prince to enter the city with Persian troops. In that case it would be impossible to restrain the inhabitants. Thank goodness he is coming with only a small retinue and those are Armenians."

"But men who have denied their Armenian origin," the Lady interrupted bitterly.

At that moment the elder of the princely house made his appearance.

"Behold the holy father," the old man announced.

This hoary priest who was remarkably robust and energetic in spite of his age was the pastor of the princely house. He came near, uttered the fatherly benediction, and stood before the Lady.

"Be seated, holy father," the Lady said.

The priest sat down and gave an account of the arrangements he had made.

After leaving the salon, the Lady Vahan-doukt had gone straight to her rooms together with her two children. The older of these was a boy, the younger a girl. The boy knew that that day his father would arrive, he still remembered when the latter had left for Persia. When they sat down, he threw his tiny arms around his mother's neck and asked:

"Mommy, will my Daddy bring the horse today?"

"What horse?" the mother asked in a sad voice.

"Don't you know? When Daddy left I asked him to bring me a horse, a little tiny horse. He kissed me and said he would bring me a tiny horse,—this big." And the little boy raised his hand to indicate the size of the horse.

"We have many horses my child," the mother replied.

"Our horses are big, very big, I want a little one so I can ride him."

"The servants will help you ride the horse."

"I am not Noushik so the servants will lift me and put me on the horse. I want to mount the horse myself."

They called his little sister by the affectionate name of Noushik whose real name of Mihranouysh.

Her brother's remark apparently wounded little Noushik's vanity. Like a bird she darted on one of the pillows on the sofa, and churning her chubby little legs, said:

"See? I too can ride."

The mother took both children in her arms, kissed them, and turned them over to their nurses. She told the nurses to take them for a walk so they would not disturb her. She was all alone now. What an unfortunate wife of unfortunate circumstances! Her children were happy that their father was coming, and yet she could not be glad. She loved her husband in whom she found her whole comfort. But now, how could she love that "apostate"? How could she love an evil-doer? The thought was churning her soul like the fury of a storm, agitating her because her heart and mind would not be reconciled together.

After her children left her, she was in a deep spiritual agony. Her inner struggle, the intense clash of her feelings had put her into a state of fiery fever. In an hour, in two hours, the town crier would sound the ominous news of the arrival and everything would be all over for her. Her position was like that of the condemned prisoner in his last moments as he waited for the final curtain. Behold the door of the prison are creaking open, the executioner is coming in, and presently they will lead him to the gallows. That was the way she would throw herself into the arms of the man whom all the world had repudiated. She had to embrace a husband whose hands were stained with the blood of her innocent loved ones. Was she not the most miserable of all Armenian women? But she loved him, yes, loved him. . . .

She took her hand to her breast and pressed the flaming heart underneath, to allay her pain somewhat. The tears were flowing down from her suffering eyes like a torrent but they could not extinguish the fire in her heart. She kept suffering in that state for a long time.

Suddenly she flew up, and like one gone mad, she surveyed her surroundings with her misty eyes. Stunned, she was staring at this or that corner, as if she was looking for

something. She took a few steps toward the door but instantly stopped still. Again, as if propelled by an invisible power, she kept walking, approached the door, and with a trembling hand locked it from the inside. Like a sleep-walker she groped along from corner to corner. She walked to the windows and pulled down the shades. Again she walked to the door to make sure that it was locked. Her face was tranquil now, she had found a way of quieting herself at last. She began to search the windows, and to ransack all the drawers where all her valuables were kept. Her gaze fell on a small chest which held her needlework. She was happy as one who was discovered an unexpected treasure. She ran to the chest, opened it, and took out a small pair of scissors. For a few moments she held the shining instrument in her hand and kept looking at it fascinated. She had found the desirable object she sought. That little object would ease her mind and would settle the doubt in her heart—the irreconcilable conflict of her feelings.

First she took the sharp point of the scissors to her palpitating breast but the thing was too short to plunge into the heart. Then she opened the blades and drew it across her throat. At that instant the angel of mercy seized her hand, as it were. She flung away the scissors indignantly, saying, "No, he is not worth it. I shall not die for him,—he who betrayed his country and, yes, betrayed me."

What was the power which so unexpectedly revolutionized her mind? It was the power which more than all the other passions controls a woman's feelings—jealousy.

"I know him," she continued bitterly. "He was not so low as to deny his religion; he was not so cruel as to trample under his feet the fate of his country, and he was not so ambitious as to have been lured by Sapor's promises of a kingdom. But he undertook all these and became a tool in the hands of the Persian King only in order to possess

his sister. They told me he was in love with Sapor's sister but I did not believe it. Yes, I did not believe he would be so disloyal to the mother of his children as to install a second wife in the home of the Artzrounis. What will my position be after that? I will become a concubine of the Persian royal daughter and will straighten her shoes. And the beautiful Vormizdoukht not only will be the Lady of Vaspourakan, but the Queen of all Armenia. But me? Oh, no, no. It is not worth dying for him. As to him, he is already dead for me."

She sat down on the sofa, covered her face in her hands, and again the hot tears flowed down her eyes like a torrent. "Akh, Meroujan, Meroujan!" she sobbed chokingly.

There were several knocks on her door. Finally she heard it, rose up, wiped her tears, and reluctantly walked to the door and opened it. It was one of her maids.

"They all are getting ready, Madam, shall I dress you?" the maid asked.

"Go to my wardrobe, Siranouysh, and bring out my black dress," she ordered.

"Why the black dress, Madam?"

"Today is a day of mourning, Siranouysh," the Lady replied in a mournful tone.

It was four hours past midday. A company of horsemen, lost in a cloud of dust, were galloping along the road from Assyria to Hadamakert. They accelerated their pace the nearer they came to the city. It was a small company. Their leader carried in his hand a red flag. He was followed by a white horseman who seemed their chief, followed in turn by nine horsemen, —altogether eleven men. It was Meroujan Artzrouni, going to the metropolis of his ancestors—the princely capital, Hadamakert.

That lively road along which his retinue was traveling, the road which usually was filled with a gay crowd all day long, was deserted now. There was no one in sight. Meroujan was surprised. He looked around him with uneasy eyes. No longer shone the

reaper's sickle which used to enliven the countryside in this cool hour of the day, no longer was heard the song of the plougher, nor even the flute of the shepherd. Neither he nor his flocks were in sight. It seemed he was passing through a desert where life and activity had ceased long since.

But he had been expecting an entirely different thing. He had been expecting that his countrymen would meet him in huge throngs, lined up on either side of the roads with crowds of men and women, to lead him to his princely mansion amid shouts of joy and the sound of music. Not even members of his princely house had come to meet him. Did they not know that he was coming? He had sent word to his mother the day before. What was the meaning of this abysmal silence then?

The thought disturbed him deeply and filled him with ominous misgivings, which gradually grew in dark, foreboding suspicions. His boundless vanity would not permit him to turn back, but he could expect nothing good by keeping on. Could it be that he would encounter the rebellion of his countrymen? Would they meet him with arms in hand? "Whatever happens, it will not matter" he thought with a deep resentment and decided to go through with it.

Finally he reached the gates of the city. He gazed at the gate and he was frightened. That magnificent gate whose tall arches used to be adorned with floral wreaths on all occasions of solemn entries presented a sad spectacle now. The gate was draped with black sheets while two black flags floated on the capstone. This was the way they used to do when they carried away a princely casket. But who was the dead prince now? For whom was all this mourning? . . .

He entered in with deep palpitations of the heart. The leading flag-bearer took the trumpet hanging from his belt and sounded it several times. The signal was answered by the toll of the church bell which echoed three

times. That sound, like the voice of heaven, struck terror into the heart of the "apostate."

But he kept on. The gay, humming Hadamakert was like a dead city. There was no one in the streets, not even an animal. Not a sound nor a whisper to break the cemetery silence. The streets along which he rode and which led straight to his princely mansion oppressed him with a heavy, killing weight. The ground was covered with layers of ashes. All the doors of the houses were closed, and the fronts of the doors likewise were draped in black.

"My countrymen have turned against me," he thought. "They don't even want to look at me. They count me as dead, yes, spiritually dead."

His anger was stifling him as he remembered the old times. There had been days—happy days—when on his triumphant return from the battle, those streets were bedecked with garlands, and now they were strewn with ashes. There had been days when the doorfronts were carpeted with precious, velvet rugs and beautifully embroidered colorful draperies, and now the whole city was dressed in mourning attire. There had been days when the women and the maidens of the city greeted his entry from the windows and the housetops, and now there was not a sound, not even a whisper. There had been days when his entry was signalized with sacrificial offerings at each step, all the way from the city gate to his mansion. When the High Priest, attired in his pontifical golden vestments, and accompanied by his retinue, with crosses and censors, would escort him to his home with benedictions and the singing of Sharakans. When he himself, surrounded by his dignitaries, would make his triumphant march, while the steeds of the princely house, appareled in their costly and gorgeous panoply, led the way. And now, none of these things were in evidence.

He reached the princely mansion but found the doors closed before him. This

startled him. "It seems then my own house and family are rejecting me" he thought bitterly. Here too the same dismal and distressing spectacle faced him. Those glorious arches of the magnificent princely mansion were draped in black, flanked on both sides by two fluttering black flags.

Deeply troubled, he was standing there at the entrance of his ancestral home, not knowing what to do. That mighty man, for whom no difficulties, no obstacles in the world were too great to be surmounted, was positively helpless now in the face of this desperate impasse. He thought of turning back, but how could he do it? The shame and the indignity of it were choking him. He thought of knocking at the door, but what if they refused to open it? That degree of scorn, of abhorrence, he never expected from his mother, and especially from his wife. Like the prodigal son, they were refusing to admit him in. That was a heavy slap in his face, a bitter punishment for him. Those black draperies, all these demonstrations of mourning seemed to be saying to him: "You are not worthy to set foot on the threshold of your ancestral home. The feet of the 'apostate' will desecrate it." . . .

His men were no less confounded; none dared say a thing.

Directly above the door there was a pillared upper story with an open front which had the shape of a balcony covered with heavy curtains. The covers were drawn aside revealing the mother. The suffering woman could scarcely stand on her feet. She was supported by her daughter, Meroujan's sister on the left hand, and by her daughter-in-law, Meroujan's wife on the right. In front of the latter stood Meroujan's two children. Behind them stood the entire princely family, all dressed in mourning clothes, and all with tearful eyes. Seeing them, Meroujan's body trembled all over. "Mother," he spoke in a troubled voice, "my citizens have turned away from me, and now, will my ancestral

home too close its doors against me?"

"Yes, Meroujan," the mother replied bitterly, "Your ancestral home is closing its doors against you because you closed the doors of your heart against your God, your country, and your conscience. The apostate, the rebel cannot enter that home, Meroujan. The day you betrayed your church and your king, that day you ceased being the son of this house. You, Meroujan, are a stranger and an alien to that house now because you have stained the glorious memory of the Artzrounis. Repentance only can save you, Meroujan. Turn back from your evil way, turn back from your wandering. Hear, Meroujan, the voice of your mother who still loves you, who speaks to you with bitter tears. Listen Meroujan to the voice of your mother because it is the whole of Vaspouakan speaking through her lips. If you want to be restored to the love of your family and of the world, you must turn back from your evil way. This is the right way, Meroujan,—she pointed with her hand to the Cathedral, then continued,—your forefathers, when they returned from the battles weary and tired, they first went to the church to offer their prayers of gratitude and thanks, and only afterwards came to enjoy the love of their families. If you are the true son of your ancestors, follow their example. There, at the cathedral, the priests and the elders of the city are waiting for you. Go, Meroujan, to the church, be reconciled with Jesus Christ, repent, confess your sins in the temple of God, and then come back. Then you will find the doors of your house open to you."

"That will never be," Meroujan snarled, turning away his face.

"Mommy, Mommy, where's Daddy going?" the voices of the children were heard from above. . . .

Those voices pierced Meroujan's heart.

*(To be Continued)*



# BOOKS AND AUTHORS

H. KURDIAN, Reviewer

**THE HISTORY OF THE ARABS.** By Philip K. Hitti, Professor of Semitic Literature at Princeton. Published by Macmillan and Co. Ltd. London, 1946, Cloth, 8", illustrated, pp.768. Price 31s.6d.

The fame of Prof. Hitti is recommendation enough of this splendid volume on one of the most important neighboring nations of the Armenians. And while the Armenians and the Arabs have had some violent clashes as well as friendly relations with each other during the course of centuries, still few among them, not excepting the most educated, have been familiar with each other's history as such. The present volume, although in English, is interesting enough for the Armenian reader to deserve a review here.

In this volume Prof. Hitti, who incidentally is the best qualified man for the job and has done it exceedingly well, portrays the old and glorious Arabic empire from Bagdad to Spain with compact economy as well as comprehensive scope, including their art, science, literature and legendary affluence. Needless to say the author gives due credit to the Armenians for their contribution to the Arabic Empire. Its informative pages are studded with frequent references to Armenia and the Armenians, Armenian Wazirs, and their contribution to Arabic politics, military operations, and their culture. Armenians are first brought into contact with invading Arabs in the Byzantine dominion. On August 20, 636 A.D., Armenian mercenaries under Theodor, brother of Emperor Heraclius, clashed with the Arabs commanded by Khalid.

Prof. Hitti assures us that Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II received his inspiration "that the Moslem Caliph was a sort of Pope with spiritual jurisdiction over the followers of Mohammed" by his reading of "Tableau General de L'Empire Ottomane" (Paris, 1788) whose author was an Armenian by the name of d'Ohson. We also learn that, among the Abbasides, al-Mustadi's mother was Armenian, the mothers of the Caliphs Al-Qu'im, al-Muqtadi, and Al-Mustadi, which evidently have escaped the notice of learned scholars, were Armenian. The author also accepts that Sajar-al-Durr, widow of the Ayyubid al-Salih could have been an Armenian. This remarkable woman laid "the foundation of the Mameluk power" in Egypt (p. 671).

**FAMOUS ARMENIANS IN EGYPT.** Collected and translated into Armenian from original Arabic by Gevorg Missirlian. Printed in Cairo, Egypt, 1947, 8", paper bound, pp.X+190. Price \$3.00. (In Armenian).

Gevorg Missirlian, a learned Armenian scholar of Arabic literature and history, in this his work makes use of highly valuable source material carefully gleaned from Arabic texts of Maqrizi and other Arab historians. The translation is good.

While in Cairo, Egypt, in 1946, I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Missirlian and paying him a visit in his home where he told me of the progress he was making on this work. Upon my return to Witchita I heard that he had been induced to send his finished manuscript to Soviet Armenia with a promise that it would be published there. However, the work remained unpublished and the author never received an answer to his numerous requests for the return of his manuscript. Finally, in desperation, he again tackled the arduous task of re-translating which upon completion was printed in Cairo at his own expense.

The great Armenian scholar Father N. Akinian has written the preface to this work which covers the lives and deeds of many notable Armenians during the reign of the Arabic Caliphs from 640 A.D. to 1441. We are told about an Armenian of the Seventh Century A.D. who accepted the faith of Islam, although never relinquishing his Armenian name of Vartan, and became the hero of the early days of the Arabo-Byzantine struggle. We are told how Vartan, together with the Arab commanders Meslim Bin Mukallet and Amru, fell prisoners to the Greeks who not knowing the ranks of their prisoners proceeded to question them. Amru was about to reveal his identity when Vartan, his flag-bearer, slapped him and reprimanded him for speaking out of turn in front of his superiors, thus saving Amru from certain death.

This story is repeated, however, by Bar Hebraeus in his Chronography (London, 1932, p.419) where it is related that one day as King Hethoum was passing through the enemy territory in disguise and accompanied by the Mongol Ambassador, "in Arzengan (Erzinka) a man in the bazaar recognized him and cried out, 'This is King Hethoum.' And when the ambassador heard this he turned to the king as he was leading his horse and smote him on his face and reviled him saying, 'Yea, oh fool, here thou wouldst be king, and they would liken thee to a king!' And thus (the man's) suspicion was removed. And the king continued to wear the garb of peasants until he came to the frontier of the Iberians and then he revealed himself." It seems to be one of those Near East stories which has been circulated time and over again.

The Missirlian work presents the entire array of famous Armenians in the history of Egypt such as Ali Bin Yahia El Armeni, Amir el Juyush Badr el Jamal, his sons Afdal and Ahvad Bin Badr el Jamal, Ahmed son of Afdal, Yanis el Armeni, Bahram el Armeni, Talay Bin Ruzsik, his brother Badr Bin Ruzsik, the son of Talay Ruzsik bin Salih. The book also contains general information on the Ayyubis, the Fatimids and the Mameluk era Armenians in Egypt. A description of Armenian churches and monasteries in Egypt is also presented at the end of the book taken from the fragmentary work of Abu Salih el Armeni. Missirlian is ignorant

of the fact, however, that years before him the great Armenian scholar Father Chevont Alishan had already translated the same work into Armenian and had published it in a small volume.

About Bodr el Jamali and his dynasty, we are continuing our story in this issue of the Armenian Review. We are extremely grateful to Missirlian for this valuable work and hope that he will continue to enrich the Armenian bibliography with additional similar translations.

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**VISHAPNER (THE DRAGONS).** By Prof. M. Abeghian, published in Eriuan (USSR), 1941, 8°, paper binding, pp.98 and six full page illustrations. Price 6 rubles.

Dragon worship practiced by ancient Armenians has left a tangible mark on all the phases of Armenian culture. In his illuminating pamphlet Prof. Abeghian vigorously corrects the errors of Piotrovsky and Smirnov, however in his zeal he commits other errors which are just as grave.

For example, on page 73 he states that a "Semitic goddess has been accepted by the Persians. This goddess whose name is Anahid they link with the name of the Assyrian Anadu which is the surname of Ishtar. Anahida, which originally was not Iranian, was a Semitic goddess." Abeghian who is very critical of others refrains from giving his sources and whatever sources he utilizes are German, dated 1873, 1897, 1905 etc. nearly all of them half a century old. Thus, we are at a loss to know why Prof. Abeghian holds that Anahid is a Semitic or Assyrian goddess when other sources represent her as non-Semitic. His claim that Anahid was borrowed from neighboring Assyria sounds legendary and lacks scholarly substantiation.

Just to keep the record straight I would like to refresh the memory of my readers. In the 19th century B.C. Assyria is mentioned as a mere province of the Babylonian Empire. Assyria became a power only about 1100 B.C. in the days of Tiglath-pelisar first. A treaty signed between the Hittites and Ramses II of Egypt (1300-1234) is supposed to have been witnessed, among other goddesses, by the Goddess of Anad of Derband Ariza. Ariza or Arzanga of Armenia was perhaps one of the most famous places, if not the most famous, where Anahid had a temple and was worshipped as late as the third century A.D.

In "Revue de l'Histoire des Religions," 1933, J. Pazylyusky published an article entitled "Le Culte de la Grande Déesse" and the Anahid of Avesta. The Greeks knew her as Anaisis, the Persians as Ana-hid and Ardivi. In Avesta "Ardivi" signifies "great river," "fountain," and "great mother." Without a doubt Tanaes (Don River) and the Celtic Tanu-vious (Danoub) originally were linked with Ardivi, and they in turn were linked with the Sumerian Nana (sin and nin), and with Vona (Semitic Ishtar.)

We cannot expand much more on the subject here. We believe there is little in this work of Prof. Abeghian which can be considered as a substantial contribution to the general history of the Dragon. The ancient Armenian culture is very rich in material pertaining to dragon worship which some competent scholar who has access to all the

newly-discovered archaeological material in Armenia and other parts of the USSR, as well as the recent material on the subject published in Europe and America, should compile in an exhaustive volume.

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**HISTORICAL STUDIES (PATMAKAN USSUM-NASIROUTYOUNNER).** By N. Adontz. Paris, France, 1948, 8°, pp.538. (In Armenian).

The late Prof. Adontz was without doubt one of the most learned Armenian scholars, particularly on the subject of Armenians in the Byzantine Empire. In collecting, reediting and publishing this group of monographs by Adontz, Khondkarian has rendered a great service to the Armenian readers who are interested in the subject, adding meanwhile another laurel to the memory of Adontz.

The present work is a collection of ten monographs by Adontz, originally published in Hairenik Monthly, corrected and edited by Khondkarian: 1) Political Currents in Ancient Armenia; 2) The Glory of the Bagratids; 3) The Ancient Armenian Rusticity; 4) The Armenian Gold Mine; 5) Mundanism of Ancient Armenians; 6) Artavan, Arshakouni; 7) Vardan Mamikonian; 8) The Mamikonian Princes on the Byzantine Throne; 9) Basil the Armenian; 10) Armenian Scientists in Byzantium.

Naturally, some of the material is and will be controversial until new material is brought to light which will clarify them. The work, although well written and interesting even to a layman, has an important shortcoming. It seems Adontz was very niggardly in quoting his sources. The lack of the all important index at the end of the book is another greatly missed asset of this valuable work.

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**ARMENIAN GRAMMAR (Western Dialect)** by Father S. L. Kogian, 1949, Mekhitarist Press, Vienna, Austria, pp.383, cloth binding, price \$5.25.

For some time there has been a standing need of a standard text book for those of our young people of Armenian ancestry who want to learn the mother tongue. The demand has been equally true of non-Armenians who have married Armenian boys or girls, and consequently, have expressed a desire to learn the language of their spouses. Hairenik has received numerous calls in this respect but unfortunately to date we have not had a tangible volume which we could offer them for their instruction.

Father Kogian's Armenian Grammar is designed to meet just this need. By virtue of the author's pre-eminent reputation and proven mastery of the Armenian language, the conception and the structure of the work, as well as its pedagogical approach, this book has all the qualifications for meeting the aforementioned pressing need. Henceforth, not only the Armenian youth who has a smattering of the mother tongue as a result of what he has heard in his home and in his associations with the Armenians, but even the total stranger, has an opportunity to start from scratch and learn a perfectly new language if he will only assiduously and patiently follow the course of instruction which has been mapped out for him in these 383 pages.

Explanations in English, printed Armenian words side by side with their English equivalents, this

comprehensive, detailed, and painstaking work consists of three parts in addition to a Preliminary which introduces the beginner to the Armenian alphabet, the use of words, reading, writing and spelling.

Part One deals with parts of speech; Part Two, sentence structure; Part Three, common phrases and conversation; Part Four, an Armenian-English vocabulary or a simple dictionary of common words. The work also includes a section of chosen Armenian excerpts from classical and modern masters of the Armenian language as samples of Armenian literature designed to give the beginner a taste of the richness and the grandeur of the Armenian language.

The dictionary part alone which comprises some 12,000 words is worth a substantial part of the price of the book, particularly in view of the fact that at present no standard Armenian-English dictionaries are available, and those which exist are far and few between. A supplement of this sort is a valuable asset in the hands of a translator who is looking for the exact equivalent of an Armenian word.

The chief defect of the work, a feature from which the dictionary part fortunately is exempt, or almost exempt, is the weakness of the idiomatic English which appears in the English equivalents or translations of Armenian words and particularly the sentences. This could easily have been eliminated had the original manuscript passed the inspection of an English scholar before being sent to the printers. Notwithstanding it all, the student who is familiar with the English language can easily deduct the meaning of the original Armenian and this minor defect will in no wise hamper his progress in learning the new language.

All in all, Father Kogian has rendered a great service to the Armenian young generation in putting on the market a much-needed work of this sort as a first trial which may be improved in succeeding publications, or in supplying the necessary motive for future authors who might be inclined to tackle the same problem.

In short, there is enough here for the beginner who starts from scratch to learn a completely new language all by himself if he only has the determination and perseverance. As the author says in his preface, less than 300 words are enough to start any new language, whereas the Armenian Grammar will furnish the student several times that number of Armenian words. At all events, Father Kogian's Armenian Grammar is the only work of its kind extant at present, and as such it is an invaluable aid to anyone who wants to learn the Armenian language. Application should be made to the Mekhitar Home, 27 Hillside Road, Watertown, Mass.

Reviewed by JAMES G. MANDALIAN

*DON'T GO AWAY MAD and two other plays* By William Saroyan, Harcourt, Brace and Company, New York, 1949.

Next to the instinct of self-preservation which is innate to all men, the problem which preoccupies the human mind mostly is the matter of self-adjustment. This does not necessarily refer to that particular temperamental coordination which is

generally known as adjustment to one's environment but has to do with the far deeper problem of one's acceptance of the life in which he finds himself. In brief, the problem primarily has to do with the philosophical questions of: What is life? What is the supreme aim in life? What is the role of the individual in that life? And how can the individual get the maximum out of the brief span which is allotted to him as a mortal being? When the individual has found the answer to these questions and has consummated his adjustment he becomes the philosopher's man.

However, by the time we round up our philosopher's man, it is often discovered that life already has run its course. Just when man realizes that he has understood the mystery of life he is confronted with the ironic contingency of making his departure. It would be simple enough if our philosopher's man was ready to embark on life at the age of ten. After that the going would be easy and the waste in our pursuit of the fuller life would be infinitesimal, if any. But the problem is not so simple as that. It takes a good many hard knocks by the time we understand the real meaning of life and are prepared to get the most out of it. Most often, if not invariably always, it takes some major crisis, such as suddenly coming face to face with death, until we are driven to some soul-searching and discovering what life is all about. The drowning man, the man who walks to the electric chair, or faces the firing squad, lives a whole eternity in those brief few seconds between the switch and his quietus.

In "Don't Go Away Mad," which incidentally is the essential philosophy of the play, or the moral if you please, the author has chosen the medium of a major crisis in order to arouse his characters, what proves to be for the first time in their lives, into a serious effort at soul-searching and self-adjustment. The action takes place in a San Francisco hospital for incurables. All the characters—Greedy Reed, Georgie Porgie, Brick, Poseyo, Andy Boy, and Buster are dying men. They all realize that they are doomed and have very little to live. So, in their panic, each begins to take stock of himself and the life he has lived.

Under ordinary circumstances this grim realization of impending doom should make these characters irascible, hateful, vengeful, and nasty, and in fact there are frequent outcroppings of all these manifestations, but the baser qualities do not run away with the show. There are spiritual and redeeming forces which hold the situation under perfect control.

Poseyo, the gentle Greek of few words, is the first to find himself. He is the first to be saved. He is perpetually listening to his records, Mozart or Khatchaturian. He has no hatred in his heart. He speaks very little and is perfectly at peace with God and his fellowmen. Brick is a disillusioned frustrated man, bitter with the whole thing, but who, before he destroys himself, has his moment of reconciliation. He recalls the sweetest moment of his life and wishes he could repeat it if he only had a second chance.

Greedy Reed, the central character of the play, is a good-hearted negro who is very sensitive about his color and imagines that everyone looks down

on him. He resents the fancied arrogance and is ready to commit holy murder but soon discovers that everybody is too worried by his own troubles to even notice his color. The recovery of his equality establishes his self-respect and he is half-saved now. To salvage the other half, he now attacks his ignorance by studying all the words in the dictionary which Andy Boy, a Chinese lad, reads for him. His exuberance over the revelation of the meaning of the words which he did not know before constitutes one of the finest contribution of the entire play. Greedy Reed, too, finds himself.

Georgie Porgie is the philosopher of the play. He is the coordinator and the resolver of all the troubles of the doomed men. He is the sustainer of all. He is the one who keeps the flickering light burning. By playing on their emotions, by subtle appeals to their sense of jealousy, envy, hatred, or their better nature and their sense of decency, as the case may be, he contrives to keep them excited and to avoid the Doctor's operating table, in his effort to prolong their lives by a few days or weeks. He too is an incurable. He suffers from excruciating pains and has lost his sight, still he manages to hold the crumbling structure together. He is the personification of goodness. During one of his expatiations he says that man neither hates nor loves, he only breathes. But this is not his real philosophy. He is only saying it in order to calm the doomed men's nerves and to soothe their spirits, because it is obvious that there is no longer any hatred in that tragic group—only love.

With one of the inmates having passed away the night before, with Brick having committed suicide, and with Andy Boy having died on the operating table, a catastrophe for which Greedy Reed holds the Doctor responsible and is resolved to kill him, just when the whole house is ready to collapse and the place will be littered with the dead, a newcomer enters the scene. Buster, a frustrated businessman whose young wife has deserted him for a younger lover and has denied him seeing his five year old son, who has been humiliated by the young lover right in front of his wife, lands at the hospital, chagrined and bitter. He confides his troubles to Georgie Porgie who lends him all his money in order to enable the latter to carry out his plan of revenge. That night Buster sneaks out of the hospital and kills the seducer of his wife. He then returns to the hospital and tells Georgie Porgie what he has done.

The next morning the papers announce a mysterious killing. Georgie Porgie knows who the killer is, Greedy Reed suspects it, and Poseyo overhears the two. But they accept Buster with a warmth which tingles the blood. Georgie Porgie makes them all swear that they don't know who the killer is, that they never heard of him. The restoration of Buster's self-respect as well as his act of justice, a kind of justice which the conventional purveyors of the law would never understand, furnishes the necessary spark to rally the dying men to forget their plight, forget that they are dying men, in their noble effort to protect Buster. Buster's crime enables the doomed men to find themselves and to live once more the fuller life, the real life, even if it is for only a short time.

This is the story and the moral of "Don't Go

Away Mad." It is another of Saroyan's usual civilized stories. There is not much exciting action in it. There are no dramatic scenes, no minor or major consummations, no hair raising climacteric endings. It is gentle and mellow, humanizing, ennobling, and refining, the same as all the Saroyan stories. It is written with the usual insurpassable Saroyan originality and wit, crisp and sparkling. It is something fresh and tingling. The reader, or the spectator of the play, comes out a better man for having got acquainted with Greedy Reed and Georgie Porgie.

Reviewed by JAMES G. MANDALIAN

H. R. KNICKERBOCKER

On July 12, 1949, the newspapers published the very sad news of a plane crash in Bombay Island airfield in which 45 persons met their untimely death. Among these 45 were 13 American correspondents one of whom was George Moorad, an Armenian American newspaperman connected with the Radio Station KGW of Portland, Oregon.

It is not for George Moorad whom I did not know personally, however, that I am refreshing your and my memories. During my 1946 flight from Rome to Athens I met a friendly red-headed American correspondent. We were in the same plane from Athens to Cairo and took lodging together at Shepherd's Hotel for a few days. We naturally talked about the Armenians and the then current topic of the extension of Soviet Armenia by the annexation of Kars and Ardahan. My companion was H. R. Knickerbocker.

Well informed on Near Eastern affairs, Knickerbocker did not think it would be wise for the U. S. to support the USSR claims against the Turk. I could see his point of view, but still as an Armenian I argued with him the great injustice which was done to the Armenians after the First World War, and insisted that Kars and Ardahan should be annexed to Armenia in rectification of that error to enable the Armenian fugitives in the Near East and Europe to return to their homeland. However, in the end we both arrived at the same conclusion that the Armenian demands were hopelessly impossible under the existing circumstances. "Please tell me," he would say to me, "assuming that Kars and Ardahan, or some other parts of Turkish Armenia were returned to the Armenians. Then what? Could you tell me what army or police force would march into the annexed territory? Could or would it be anything else but the Red Army? You know very well that even in your beloved Armenia of the USSR it is the Soviet army which occupies as far as the Turkish or Persian borders, with perhaps few Armenians in its ranks. This army, like all the other USSR armies, is controlled and directed not from Erivan but from Moscow, and not in conformity with the needs and the wishes of the puppet Armenian government, but the all-powerful lords of the Kremlin."

During our short stay at Shepherd's we often saw each other and, as usual, I tried to win him over as a friend of the Armenians. We spoke of old Armenian arts and culture. He was quite favorably inclined toward the Armenians and no doubt eventually would have been won over. In one of our meetings he introduced me to a bright Armen-



ian young lady who at the time was working for the *Time Magazine* in Cairo. If my memory does not fail me, I think her name was Najarian, hailing from the New England states. (In all probability the girl was Miss Betty Sarafian from Boston who at the time was connected with the *Time Magazine* and who made a trip abroad just about the time Mr. Kurdian speaks of.—ED. A.R.).

Knickerbocker was to fly to Ankara and then proceed to Istanbul. He had some difficulty in clearing his papers with the British and meanwhile I was waiting for permission to fly to Palestine which in those days was the seat of considerable unrest. Eventually we both succeeded in getting our passports. I often expressed my desire to accompany him to Istanbul and he could not understand why the Turks would not permit me to enter their country. I told him how once I had tried and had been subjected to annoying and stupid delays right at the port of Istanbul. He knew that my only interest in visiting Istanbul was to be able to get hold of Armenian manuscripts for my collection and to see the newly-discovered mosaics of St. Sophia. Before his departure he promised me he would do his best to secure the necessary permission so the two of us could go to Istanbul together. "I will be in Norman, Oklahoma, for a scheduled talk and then I will see you in Wichita where we will lay our plans for our joint trip." I agreed and we parted in Cairo that day.

The next year I was in Europe again and could not see him. In 1948, February 16th, he was in Wichita to give a talk to the Junior League. The morning of that day he phoned me from his hotel and told me to wait for him at my office, and shortly after that he came in with his big, honest smile lighting his face, accompanied by some friends from Texas, a well-to-do oilman, and his charming wife.

"Well?" said Knickerbocker, "are you ready for the trip to Turkey?" Then he told me that, while in Istanbul, he had spoken to W. E. Allen about our planned trip and all about my mania for collecting manuscripts. He invited Mrs. Kurdian and me to attend his address, but unfortunately I myself was scheduled to give a talk that night before a men's supper club. Early next morning he had to leave and thus, one way or another, we did not

see each other. Then one day in July, 1949, I read the shocking news of a plane crash, 45 people killed, among whom was the "red" Knickerbocker.

The day he visited me in Wichita he spent hours looking over Armenian manuscripts, noting the titles of English works dealing with Armenia. He was very curious in every way about Armenia and the Armenians. There is no doubt that a new and staunch friend of Armenians was in the making when the hand of death suddenly cut his life short.

#### PATRIARCH ISRAELIAN

The late Patriarch Kuregh Israelian of Jerusalem whose death is mourned by Armenians world over was a devoted servant of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Although comparatively young, he succumbed to the unbearable hardships incurred by the recent Arabo-Jewish conflict which brought so much harm to his monastery and his people. He strove heroically to protect his people from the ravages of the cruel war and in the attempt sacrificed his health and life.

I knew Patriarch Kuregh personally for long years and I can say without hesitation that seldom have I known a more friendly, sincere and devoted clergyman. The last time I visited him in Jerusalem in 1946 he generously permitted me to study the manuscripts of St. James Monastery. He had some excellent plans and expressed the hope to me that I might cooperate with him in supplying him with the copies of the photographs that I was taking from a number of Armenian manuscripts of the monastery. I gave him my word that I would send them to him, however, the world war, and now his sudden passing, prevented me from fulfilling my promise. I will keep my word, however, and will supply the promised photos to his successor as a very small tribute from me to his dear and cherished memory.

H. Kurdian

#### A CORRECTION

In the last issue of the *Armenian Review*, page 41, col. 2, paragraph 2, the sentence reading: "It is written on velum, single column, in Armenian 'Colorair' (round letters) etc." should read: "in Armenian 'Polorkir' (round letters), etc."

In the same issue, page 158, Mr. Kurdian's signature should read H. KURDIAN, instead of K. KURDIAN.





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